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Ministry  
of Justice

# **What Works in Managing Young People who Offend? A Summary of the International Evidence**

**Joanna R Adler, Sarah K Edwards, Mia Scally, Dorothy Gill,  
Michael J Puniskis, Anna Gekoski and Miranda A H Horvath**

**Forensic Psychological Services at Middlesex University**

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## Summary

This review was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice and considers international literature concerning the management of young people who have offended. It was produced to inform youth justice policy and practice. The review focuses on the impact and delivery of youth justice supervision, programmes and interventions within the community, secure settings, and during transition into adult justice settings or into mainstream society.

## Approach

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) was conducted to assess the international evidence systematically. In line with English and Welsh youth justice sentencing, young people were taken to be 10-17 years old when considering initial intervention, programmes and supervision, and up to 21 years old when considering transitions into the adult criminal justice system and resettlement post release from custody. Evidence was considered from any country where studies were reported in English, and published between 1<sup>st</sup> January 1990 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014.

The majority of these findings are from evaluations conducted in the United States of America and their transferability to an English and Welsh context should be considered given the different legal and sentencing frameworks, as well as economic and social contexts.

## Key findings

### Key elements of effective programmes to reduce reoffending

In line with most previous reviews, effective interventions in reducing youth reoffending considered the factors set out below.

- The individual's risk of reoffending: assessing the likelihood of further offending and importantly, matching services to that level of risk with a focus on those people who are assessed as having a higher risk.
- The needs of the individual: focusing attention on those attributes that are predictive of reoffending and targeting them in rehabilitation and service provision.
- An individual's ability to respond to an intervention: maximising the young person's ability to learn from a rehabilitative programme by tailoring approaches to their learning styles, motivation, abilities and strengths.

- The type of programme: therapeutic programmes tend to be more effective than those that are primarily focused on punitive and control approaches. Therapeutic approaches include:
  - skills building (e.g. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy; social skills);
  - restorative (e.g. restitution; victim-offender mediation);
  - counselling (e.g. for individuals, groups and families) and mentoring in some contexts.
- The use of multiple services: addressing a range of offending related risks and needs rather than a single factor. Case management and service brokerage can also be important.
- Programme implementation: quality and amount of service provided and fidelity to programme design.
- The wider offending context: considering family, peers and community issues.

## Community, Custody and Resettlement

When applying risk based or other approaches to inform rehabilitation planning, it should be borne in mind that some young people will desist from crime without any intervention. There is also evidence to suggest that drawing young people who commit low level offences into the formal youth justice system may increase their offending. Therefore, diversionary approaches, including restorative justice, which direct these individuals away from the formal justice system may be appropriate for some young people.

Within the community, effective programmes can be characterised by strong inter-agency partnerships that are well managed, with appropriate strategic leadership. Partnership protocols need to be embedded into routine practice. The best international evidence shows that family based therapeutic interventions that draw on the community and also consider wider offender needs can be effective and deliver a positive net return on investment. That said, the family can itself be a setting of trauma, abuse and exploitation and this may be particularly relevant for those young people who come to the attention of youth offending teams. This, therefore, needs to be considered as part of intervention planning for young people who offend.

Community based interventions tend to be more effective than custody. Some young people will, however, always need to be sentenced to custody and these young people are likely to be those in most need of intensive intervention. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to moving young people to well trained foster carers. Good quality supervision in



custody also requires planning for release and resettlement to be an integral part of the sentence, and for young people's needs to be assessed in terms of transition back to the community. Brokers or advocates who will help guide young people through this transition and be available whenever needed are worth considering.

Prison visitation programmes aimed at young people at risk of offending were not found to reduce offending behaviour; conversely, they may increase the likelihood of committing crime. Military style 'boot camps' run as alternative to custody were also found not to reduce reoffending.

No one style of talking with or to young people is going to resonate either with all staff or all those in their care. However, there is some consensus that effective communication is characterised by mutual understanding, respect, and fairness. Motivational interviewing and other techniques that allow a young person to confront the consequences of his or her actions can be useful when deployed in conjunction with other support and individual therapies.

Finally, in all settings young people need to be encouraged to develop agency, autonomy, and respect for others as well as themselves. This requires commitment from staff as well as the young people themselves. Care should be taken to make sure that young people understand how they arrived at their position, and how to move forward.

# 1. Introduction

Over the last decade, there have been substantial reductions in the number of young people entering the youth justice system, including those entering the system for the first time and those sentenced to custody.<sup>1</sup> The proven reoffending rate for young people has, however, remained the highest across all age groups.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, this review was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice to support youth justice policy development and practice. The findings are timely given that a Review of the Youth Justice System was announced in autumn 2015 which aims to consider the *'efficiency and effectiveness of the youth justice system in preventing offending, identify effective practice and make recommendations for improvement.'*<sup>3</sup>

## 1.1 Aims

This report aims to review the international literature to identify 'what works' in managing young people who have offended. It focuses on the impact, efficacy and delivery of youth justice supervision and interventions. This is considered within the community, secure settings and during transition into adult justice settings or into mainstream society. It does not, however, include studies that focus on early years prevention programmes, crime prevention or reduction strategies or community based approaches that did not involve the direct management of young people who have offended. These types of approaches and interventions have been reviewed in recent years.<sup>4</sup>

## 1.2 Approach

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) of the international literature was conducted. An REA is a systematic and timely way of gathering, reviewing and synthesising evidence to answer policy and practice questions about what is effective.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Youth Justice Board / Ministry of Justice. (2015) Youth Justice Statistics 2013/14. Youth Justice Board. Between the peak in the number of young people in the youth justices system (2006/07) and 2013/14, the following reductions have been observed: first time entrants to the youth justice have reduced by 81%; the number of youth cases in the criminal courts has fallen by 65%; and, the average number of 10 to 17 year olds in the youth secure estate has fallen by 64% and is now around 1,000.

<sup>2</sup> Ministry of Justice. (2015). Proven offending statistics January 2013 to December 2013. Ministry of Justice. In 2013, the overall proven reoffending for all offenders was 26.5% and for those aged 10 to 17 years it was 37.9%. The highest rates were for 10 to 14 year olds (38.4%), closely followed by 15 to 17 year olds (37.8%). Those aged 50 and over had the lowest rate (13.1%).

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Justice. (2015) The Youth Justice Review: terms of reference (pg 1): <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/youth-justice-review-terms-of-reference> Included for context.

<sup>4</sup> See Allen, 2011; Ross et al., 2011.

<sup>5</sup> See the following website for further detail on REAs: <http://www.civilservice.gov.uk/networks/gsr/resources-and-guidance/rapid-evidence-assessment/what-is>

In line with English and Welsh youth justice sentencing, young people were taken to be 10-17 years old when considering initial intervention, programmes and supervision, and up to 21 years old when considering transitions into the adult criminal justice system and resettlement post release from custody. Evidence was considered from any country if studies were reported in English, and published between 1<sup>st</sup> January 1990 and 28<sup>th</sup> February 2014. An exception to these criteria was made for seminal studies or where recent systematic reviews or meta-analyses presented relevant findings for broader age ranges (e.g. young adults up to the age of 21 or 25).

Where possible, UK estimates on the return on investment for the various interventions have been incorporated into this report. The Social Research Unit (SRU), at Dartington in England, has conducted analysis that is based on the economic benefit-cost model developed by Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in the United States.<sup>6</sup> The SRU recalculated the WSIPP cost estimates based on UK information and these figures are presented, where relevant, throughout the findings sections of this report.

### 1.3 Weight of evidence

Materials were sifted using a Weight of Evidence (WoE) process. A WoE approach is taken to facilitate systematic judgements about the methodological quality of potential materials and their relevance to the specified research questions.

Two WoE scales were used to indicate the strength of evidence: the Maryland Scientific Methods Scales (MSMS), and an adapted form of the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI) scale. The MSMS approach<sup>7</sup> assesses the design and validity of outcome studies, which aim to answer ‘what works’ questions, and takes a randomised controlled trial (RCT) as the ‘gold standard’. Scores are allocated for each study from one to five, with five being the most robust. Studies that were assigned a MSMS of three or more on the design scale were included in this review to provide evidence on impact.

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<sup>6</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) maintains and publishes information that considers the monetary and social returns of criminal justice interventions and their relative efficacy. The findings are based upon international systematic reviews and meta-analysis, with most studies originating from the USA. For more information please see the cost-benefit information on the WSIPP website: <http://www.wsipp.wa.gov/BenefitCost>.

<sup>7</sup> Sherman et al., 1998.

The adapted EPPI approach<sup>8</sup> was also used to assess the relevance and methodology of the evidence. This scale was used to consider other quantitative and qualitative studies which can provide context and information on how programmes and interventions can be implemented to offer the best chance of success. The overall EPPI scale scores studies from one to three, with three the most robust. Studies which employed the following methods were included in this review based on the criteria set out below:

- qualitative evidence: scored two or more on the EPPI overall scale. These types of studies were not scored against the MSMS; and,
- quantitative or mixed methods: scored two or more on the overall EPPI scale. They were also, for information purposes, allocated a MSMS score; however, this was not used to inform study inclusion decisions.

The MSMS design score and the adapted overall EPPI score for each study referenced in this REA are included in footnotes throughout the report.

In addition, this REA draws upon (where possible) and places more weight on the findings from relevant meta-analyses that are based on good quality outcome evaluation studies<sup>9</sup> to answer ‘what works’ questions. A meta-analysis is a statistical technique that combines the results from a number of independent studies to obtain a quantitative estimate of the overall effect of a particular intervention on a defined outcome. Meta-analysis produces a statistically stronger conclusion than can be provided by any individual study and, therefore, more emphasis is usually placed on results from this type of analysis.

Further details on the methodological approach, including the number of studies included in this REA, are set out in Appendix B (see Table B.2). Descriptions of the interventions set out in the study are described in the glossary in Appendix A.

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<sup>8</sup> Horvath et al., 2013.

<sup>9</sup> ‘Good quality’ is defined in this REA as scoring three or more on the design scale of the MSMS unless otherwise stated. Meta-analyses typically draw upon the findings from a systematic review of the evidence base.

## 1.4 Points to consider when interpreting findings

There are some limitations to this REA that should be noted when interpreting findings.

- Materials not produced in English were not considered.
- The majority of the materials were international, with most studies originating from the United States. Therefore, the transferability of findings to the English and Welsh context should be considered given the often different:
  - legal and sentencing frameworks;
  - crime, offending and reoffending definitions and measurement; and,
  - different economic and social contexts (including the extent and nature of welfare benefit systems).
- The majority of the studies included draw on white males in the upper range of the 10 to 17 year old age group (e.g. 15 to 17 year olds) and some findings may not be relevant to, or appropriate for, other population groups (e.g. young women, black and other minority ethnic groups or younger age groups such as 10 to 14 year olds). Even in reviewed studies including two genders, or those studies with ethnically representative samples, disaggregation of data was frequently limited, which means that potential gender and ethnicity differences in outcomes may not be apparent.
- Use of two WoE approaches was designed to encompass a diverse range of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. However, each essentially assesses the quality of evaluation, rather than the intervention. As such, potentially successful interventions may have been excluded from this review.
- Most findings are based on group averages (means) and, therefore, the effect (if any) will vary depending on the characteristics and circumstances of individuals in receipt of the intervention.
- Additionally, even when a high quality study (e.g. 4 or 5 on the MSMS) shows strong group effects in those programmes evaluated, these may not always be replicated on subsequent roll out. This could be due to socio-economic, contextual or juridical differences, or to other factors including fidelity of implementation, differences in staffing, and motivation or compliance of young people.
- Lastly, it is worth bearing in mind that across the studies reviewed, there was a wide variation in the nature of comparison groups and in the interventions against which evaluated programmes were compared. The overall confidence in conclusions drawn takes such difficulties into account.

## 2. Key elements of effective intervention

### Summary of findings

International reviews of the rehabilitation evidence found that the most successful interventions to reduce reoffending among young people included a number of elements.

The most effective approaches:

- assessed the likelihood or risk of an individual reoffending and, importantly, matched services to that risk level with a focus on those who are assessed as having a higher likelihood of reoffending;
- considered the needs and strengths of the individual and their ability to respond to the intervention;
- were characterised by using a combination of skills training and cognitive behavioural intervention approaches, rather than deploying primarily punitive or surveillance focussed programmes;
- considered the amount and quality of service provided and programme fidelity. The wider offending context, such as family, peers and community issues, should also be taken into account;
- employed a multi-modal design with a broad range of interventions that address a number of offending related risks. Case management and service brokerage can also be important; and
- made sure communication between staff and young people was strengthened through mutual understanding, respect, and fairness.

The findings drawn on in this section are principally from sources that were synthesised according to the principles stated in Chapter 2 (and Appendix B). In some cases, findings have been considered from studies that fell outside the scope of the REA. In each such case, a footnote has been included to highlight the reasons for inclusion and potential limitations.

An international systematic review and meta-analysis of international interventions<sup>10</sup> highlighted certain programme elements which were associated with reducing reoffending in young people. These elements were:

- risk level of targeted individual;
- type of programme: therapeutic versus control approaches; and,
- quality and amount of service.

## 2.1 Risk level of targeted young offenders

The same meta-analysis found there was little overall difference in interventions' outcomes that were associated with the demographic characteristics of age, gender, and ethnicity. There was, however, one characteristic that did show an overall relationship when compared to the comparison group. Namely, those interventions applied to high risk offenders produced larger average (mean) recidivism reductions than when interventions were applied to low risk offenders.<sup>11</sup> This finding can, perhaps, be explained by data indicating that high risk young offender groups were more likely to have high reoffending rates and therefore there was more opportunity for the received intervention to demonstrate change. Conversely, low risk young offenders were less likely to reoffend even without interventions and therefore there was less likelihood of detecting effects of interventions on their offending behaviour.

### Risk level of targeted young offenders: Risk, Needs and Responsivity

The model of 'Risk, Needs and Responsivity' (RNR) has been widely adopted within both the youth and wider justice system. A number of international meta-analyses have shown that, if the model is implemented properly, reductions in reoffending can be detected.<sup>12</sup> The core principles of this approach focus on:

- risk: assessing the likelihood or risk of an individual reoffending, and importantly matching services to that risk level – focusing on those people who are assessed as having a higher likelihood of reoffending;

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<sup>10</sup> See Lipsey, 2009; Lipsey et al., 2010. The 2009 systematic review and meta-analysis should strictly be out of scope for this project due to included age range of offenders (12-21 years); however, as they are seminal papers in the youth justice literature they have been included here for completeness. The data included in the meta-analysis is derived from 548 outcome evaluation studies from 1958 to 2002. A programme's effect was measured on at least one crime or offending related outcome variable (e.g. re-arrest, reconviction). The outcomes of the target intervention programme were directly compared to a control group of similar young offenders who did not receive the intervention. Most studies were from the USA.

<sup>11</sup> This finding is supported by a number of meta-analyses, see for example, Andrews & Bonta, 2010 (a review of a number of meta-analyses which focuses mainly on adult offenders although it does present findings for young offenders that are relevant to this review); Koehler et al., 2013 a & b (strictly out of scope as includes young people up to age 25 but included as a highly relevant and recent meta-analysis of European interventions).

<sup>12</sup> For example see, Andrews et al., 1990; Andrews & Bonta, 2010; Koehler et al., 2013b (meta-analysis).

- need: focusing attention on those attributes that are predictive of offending (i.e. criminogenic needs) and ensuring that they are targeted in the individual's rehabilitation plan; and
- responsivity: maximise the individual's ability to learn from a rehabilitative intervention by providing cognitive behavioural treatment (CBT) and tailoring the intervention to individual learning style, motivation, abilities and strengths. Consideration should also be given to their age, gender and ethnicity.

In England and Wales the predominance of the RNR approach has, in part, resulted in a Scaled Approach (via ASSET, a structured youth justice assessment tool<sup>13</sup>), which was developed by the Youth Justice Board. This approach is intended for use by Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) to help make sure that resources are targeted at those young people who have the greatest risk of reoffending. It is also intended to be used to assess the young person's offending related needs, which in turn should be used to determine the nature and intensity of support provided.<sup>14</sup>

A Ministry of Justice study<sup>15</sup> of young people managed by YOTs assessed how well ASSET predicted future proven offending (i.e. predictive validity). Results showed that ASSET was a good predictor of one year proven reoffending. These findings broadly replicated those reported by previous studies of the predictive validity of ASSET.<sup>16</sup> Also, a small scale UK study of the Priority Young Offenders programme, which focused on continual assessment of risks and needs to refine and change the level and types of individual intervention, showed positive effects in terms of reoffending against a comparison group.<sup>17</sup>

Gender effects may also be relevant to the RNR approach. In a Canadian study, the RNR assessment tool was found to predict recidivism equally well for male and female youth;

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<sup>13</sup> ASSET assesses a young person's static and dynamic offending related risks and needs. Static factors are those that do not change over time (e.g. criminal history) and dynamic factors are those that can change (e.g. drug use).

<sup>14</sup> See YJB guidance on the Scaled Approach: <http://yjbpublications.justice.gov.uk/Resources/Downloads/Youth%20Justice%20the%20Scaled%20Approach%20-%20A%20framework%20for%20assessment%20and%20interventions.pdf>

<sup>15</sup> Wilson & Hinks, 2011 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 2). The study utilised a representative sample of 13,975 young people managed by 30 Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales between February 2008 and January 2009. Results are based on a logistic regression model and a standard statistical measure of predictive accuracy (Area Under the Curve (AUC)) was calculated. Both static (a combined measure including criminal history and density of offending) and a combination of dynamic factors (e.g. motivation to stop offending) predicted further proven reoffending.

<sup>16</sup> See Baker et al., 2003; 2005.

<sup>17</sup> Nee & Ellis, 2005 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).



however, the matching of rehabilitation services to RNR factors was significantly associated with reduced reoffending for boys but not for girls.<sup>18</sup>

The YJB's approach to resourcing risk and rehabilitation intervention planning has been debated (as has RNR).<sup>19</sup> For example, some academics<sup>20</sup> conclude that it has encouraged an actuarial approach to risk assessment and intervention.<sup>21</sup> Therefore, they have, advocated a more child focused and strengths based approach that aims to facilitate practitioner expertise and discretion around the level and nature of support provided to a young person. This has some similarities to the 'Good Lives Model', which focuses on individual offender strengths rather than primarily focusing on risks, and has been mainly considered for adult offenders.<sup>22</sup>

The concept of the 'age-crime curve' (i.e. a sharp increase in offending during early adolescence, peaking during mid-late teenage years, then declining steeply at first, to the mid-20s and, thereafter, more steadily) is widely acknowledged by academics.<sup>23</sup> It is relevant when considering RNR, or other approaches, as it suggests that some young people will eventually desist from crime without intervention. Mindful of this, some academics have indicated that there is the potential to pre-emptively stigmatise young people based on assumptions about what they might do in the future. There is evidence which indicates that where young people are brought into the formal criminal justice system for low level crime this may increase their likelihood of reoffending.<sup>24</sup> This suggests that approaches that divert young people away from the formal youth justice system at this stage may be appropriate (see also Section 4.1 which sets out the evidence for diversionary approaches).<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Vitopoulos et al., 2012 (MSMS design, 2; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>19</sup> At the time of writing, the YJB was in the process of rolling out a revised version of ASSET called ASSET PLUS which aims to facilitate, amongst other things, more practitioner flexibility around risk assessment and intervention planning.

<sup>20</sup> See for example, Haines & Case, 2012 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 3). Haines et al., 2013 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 3). Included for context.

<sup>21</sup> Other issues raised about the RNR approach include that it does not sufficiently recognise offender strengths, differences due to gender, and lacks attention to personal wellbeing.

<sup>22</sup> The Good Lives Model, although in some respects broadly consistent with elements of the RNR approach, incorporates a stronger focus on offenders' strengths and goals. It has been suggested that this can help increase the motivation of offenders to complete treatment but more research is required into its effects in practice. See for example, Ward & Brown, 2014; Willis & Ward, 2013.

<sup>23</sup> See for example, Smith, 2007; McVie, 2009. These references have been included to provide context. Findings suggest that different types of interventions may be required at different stages in the life course. There is debate around the consistency of the age-crime curve across time, jurisdictions and the degree of similarity between genders.

<sup>24</sup> See for example, McAra & McVie, 2007; Petrosino et al., 2010 (meta-analysis). Studies included for context.

<sup>25</sup> See for example Wilson & Hoge, 2012 (meta-analysis).

## 2.2 Type of programme: therapeutic approaches

The Lipsey (2009) international review classified the various programmes into broad categories based on their philosophy and general approach. The results showed that ‘therapeutic’ interventions were generally more effective at reducing reoffending than those that were primarily focused on punitive or control based approaches (e.g. interventions orientated towards instilling discipline or deterrence through fear of consequences of undesirable behaviour). These findings have been replicated in other meta-analyses.<sup>26</sup>

Therapeutic based interventions included:

- skills building (e.g. cognitive-behavioural techniques (CBT); social skills);
- restorative (e.g. restitution; victim-offender mediation); and
- counselling (e.g. for individuals, groups and families); and mentoring in some contexts can be effective.

The review also concluded that rehabilitation services that employ a multi-modal design involving a broad range of interventions that address a number of offending related risks and needs can be more effective than those that address a single factor. Case management and service brokerage can also be important (see service matched to needs section below).

## 2.3 Quality of service

Another key factor related to the magnitude of intervention effects was programme implementation. The key ingredients for effective rehabilitation are set out below.

- Intervention matched to offender needs: ensuring that offending related needs, motivation and learning styles were considered when determining the type of programme and nature of the support provided.<sup>27</sup>
- Quality of implementation: although not directly measured by the studies reviewed, indicators such as high dropout rates, staff turnover, poorly trained personnel and incomplete service delivery were associated with smaller reoffending reductions.
- Fidelity (i.e. delivery of the programme as intended): for example, when the programme developer was involved in programme implementation, the effects were generally found to be larger.

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<sup>26</sup> See for example, Bonta & Andrews, 2010; Koehler et al., 2013b (meta-analysis).

<sup>27</sup> A number of meta-analyses support this finding. See for example, Koehler et al., 2013b (meta-analysis), Andrew & Bonta, 2010 (review).

- Duration and intensity: ensuring that each person received the ‘full dose’ of the intended intervention. There was also some evidence that longer programmes (i.e. over six months) may be more effective than shorter interventions for serious youth offenders.<sup>28</sup>

## 2.4 Service matched to individual offender needs

Results from a number of longitudinal studies and meta-analyses<sup>29</sup> have identified both static and dynamic factors that can predict further offending among young people. Also, findings show that rehabilitation services need to be matched to an individual’s offending related risks and needs to have the best chance of realising behaviour change. Therefore, rehabilitation should aim to target and address ‘dynamic’ factors (i.e. those that can change over time, e.g. an individual’s drug use or motivation to change). For example, consideration should be given to providing interventions and support that can bolster self-esteem and resilience, appropriately challenge and change certain ways of thinking, increase skills, and facilitate viable alternative options to an individual’s lifestyle. It can also be important to consider an individual’s age, gender, and ethnic group. Furthermore, the wider context within which the offending occurred (e.g. family, peers and the local community) needs to be taken into account when planning and delivering rehabilitation services.

A Ministry of Justice study<sup>30</sup> of young people managed by YOTs found that overall there was room to improve the alignment between offending related risks and needs, aims in the intervention plan and subsequent supervision. YOTs were better at addressing certain factors (e.g. lifestyle, perception of self and others, thinking and behaviour, attitudes to offending and motivation to change) than others (e.g. neighbourhood, living arrangements, family and personal relationships).

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<sup>28</sup> See Lipsey, 1999 (meta-analysis); Lipsey et al., 2010, included for context.

<sup>29</sup> See for example, Welsh & Farrington, 2007 for a discussion on risk and protective factors associated with youth crime and offending. Andrews & Bonta, 2010 also provide an overview of risk and protective factors that can predict future offending regardless of age and gender. Included for context.

<sup>30</sup> Wilson, 2013 (MSMS design 2: EPPI overall 2). This study utilised a representative sample of 13,975 young people managed by 30 Youth Offending Teams in England and Wales between February 2008 and January 2009. Results, based on logistic regression, showed that the following dynamic risk factors were statistically significant predictors of one year proven reoffending: life style, substance use, and motivation to change. Other factors such as living arrangements, family and personal relationships and education, employment and training were also statistically significant at a less stringent p value.

## 2.5 Practitioner interactions with young people who offend – the ‘therapeutic alliance’

The importance of practitioner ways of working with young people, the ‘therapeutic alliance’, both in secure institutions and the community, is emphasised in qualitative research.<sup>31</sup>

Where young people are asked their views, they tend to value a relationship that is warm, open, and non-judgemental, indicating that this helps them to engage with the intervention and work towards change.<sup>32</sup>

Assessments of therapeutic engagement within secure institutions show that when young people demonstrate commitment to an institution (by following suggestions and instructions from staff) and they believe that they are likely to succeed (commitment likelihood), they are more likely to stay engaged in interventions and ultimately benefit from them.<sup>33</sup> Furthermore, Andrews and Bonta (2010) indicate that practitioner training, experience and supervision are important if the benefits from an intervention are to be realised.<sup>34</sup>

## 2.6 Multi-agency working

Young people have diverse needs relating to their offending and vary in their ability to respond to interventions. Agencies involved in their management need to embed practices to provide supervision that is coordinated, accountable and ensures that each young person's circumstances are effectively managed. Multi-agency approaches involve a range of structures, from the development of multi-agency protocols to co-location or the integration of services. This variation, and the fact that multiple agencies are involved, presents challenges, both for evaluating these approaches, and for synthesis of the evidence. For example, it can be difficult to identify the specific contribution of multi-agency working when it forms part of an intervention programme, which is often the case.

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<sup>31</sup> Jane, 2010 (qualitative; EPPI overall 2); England, 2009 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3); Halse et al., 2012 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3); Larkins & Wainwright, 2013 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3); Lambie et al., 2012 (qualitative; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>32</sup> Halse et al., 2012 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3); England, 2009 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>33</sup> Pullman et al., 2006 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3); Dowden & Andrews (meta-analysis).

<sup>34</sup> See also Lipsey, 2009 (meta-analysis); Lipsey et al., 2010.

Most of the evidence to support multi-agency working comes from process evaluations and qualitative assessments and it is generally perceived to be a key component for service provision, especially to those who are vulnerable or potentially have a wide range of needs (e.g. young offenders).<sup>35</sup> Multi-agency working involves different professional and sometimes voluntary groups, with varying cultures of practice and lines of accountability. Without proper partnership protocols and strategic leadership, inter-agency cooperation and cross referral routes may develop in a piecemeal way with both excellent and poor practices evolving in isolation. Inspection reports of YOTs and the youth secure estate in England and Wales have noted the challenges of implementing effective multi-agency working.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> See for example, Home Office, 2013; Phillips et al., 2012 (EPPI overall 2); Powell et al., 2012 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>36</sup> See for example, Criminal Justice Joint Inspection, 2010 (qualitative, EPPI overall 2); Calderbank et al., 2013 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3).

### 3. Intervention effectiveness across the youth justice pathway

#### Summary of findings

This review highlighted a number of interventions and approaches, based on international evidence, which can be used in multiple settings across the youth justice pathway to reduce reoffending.

- For those individuals who agree to take part in restorative justice and where it is appropriate to deliver these approaches, there is promising evidence that it can reduce reoffending in young people.
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy approaches can produce reductions in reoffending and deliver a net positive return on investment.
- Other individual counselling and behavioural programmes like Motivational Interviewing can be considered to support desistance.
- There is some evidence that mentoring can be an effective intervention, particularly when used early on in a young person's potential offending career.

The following interventions can be implemented at multiple stages of the youth justice pathway, including custodial settings. These interventions and approaches are typically delivered as part of broader programmes and evidence suggests that this is the best way to deliver support services to young offenders to achieve success.<sup>37</sup>

#### 3.1 Restorative Justice

Definitions vary as to what constitutes restorative justice (RJ); however, most RJ interventions place those who have been victimised more centrally within the justice process, whilst attempting to repair the harm a crime has caused. The two most prevalent restorative techniques are Victim Offender Mediation (VOM) and Family Group Conferences (FGCs), both of which are most commonly implemented in community settings; however, they can also be administered within custody. VOM requires at least one meeting to take place between the offender and victim, with the mediator present, with the aim of producing a restitution or restorative plan. FGCs aim to bring together the offender and the victim, their families, and other relevant parties (e.g. police, social worker). (See Glossary for further descriptions of VOM and FGC.)

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<sup>37</sup> See for example Lipsey, 2009 (meta-analysis); Lipsey et al., 2010.

For those individuals who agree to take part in RJ and where it is appropriate to deliver these approaches, there is promising evidence that it can reduce reoffending in young people.<sup>38</sup> A meta-analysis of VOM and FGC international studies among young people found that these interventions produced reductions in reoffending that may be twice as great as would otherwise be expected from evaluations of other youth justice interventions. The quality of the studies included in this meta-analysis mean that conclusions must be treated with some caution.<sup>39</sup>

Table 3.1 summarises the cost estimates for the UK in relation to VOM. They are based on international impact evidence and the Dartington Social Research Unit has recalculated the USA costs using information from the UK.<sup>40</sup> Taken together, the results suggest that VOM yields a net benefit of £471 and a low risk of loss to the investor (4%).<sup>41</sup>

**Table 3.1 Benefit-cost estimates (UK): Victim Offender Mediation (VOM)**

Intervention	Cost	Total benefits	Benefits minus costs	Benefit - cost ratio	Rate of return on investment	Risk of loss
VOM	£6,335	£6,806	£471	£1.07	6%	4%

FGCs have been found to lower recidivism rates, or at least time to reoffend, by up to 24 months when compared to outcomes for other diversionary schemes including teen court, community service and VOM.<sup>42</sup> However, when young people were followed up over a long time period (i.e. 12 years), differences dissipated.<sup>43</sup> FGCs seem to be particularly effective with young girls who have offended, and have not been shown to have a differential impact on young people of different ethnicities in an international study.<sup>44</sup> Also, programmes in the USA similar to FGCs (Community Justice Committees) have been shown to be particularly effective for girls and young offenders or those with shorter criminal histories.<sup>45</sup> In contrast, an RJ intervention implemented in the USA was associated with increased time to re-offend

<sup>38</sup> Bradshaw & Roseborough, 2005 (meta-analysis); Latimer et al., 2005 (meta-analysis; not strictly in scope as 26 of the 35 RJ programs evaluated were for young people, but noted as an important meta-analysis in RJ interventions); Strang et al., 2013 (meta-analysis; not strictly in scope as only 3 of the 10 included experiments were among young people aged under 18 years. However, a separate effect size is reported for young people (the average effect for young people was less than for adults)).

<sup>39</sup> Bradshaw & Roseborough, 2005 (meta-analysis).

<sup>40</sup> The Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013 cost-benefit analysis is based on the economic model developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in the USA. Cost estimates have been recalculated using UK costs. See SRU Investing in Children website for more information: <http://investinginchildren.eu/search/interventions/treatment>.

<sup>41</sup> See Glossary (Appendix A) 'Cost-benefit analysis and estimate' section for an explanation of the terms included in the table.

<sup>42</sup> McGarrell & Hipple, 2007 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3; a particularly rigorous, RCT design).

<sup>43</sup> Jeong et al., 2012 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2). The authors note that this is perhaps unsurprising given the short timescale of the intervention (typically less than an hour).

<sup>44</sup> Baffour, 2006 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>45</sup> Rodriguez, 2007 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2).

compared to traditional court processing, regardless of age at referral, gender, ethnicity, or prior offending history.<sup>46</sup>

Restorative justice techniques have also been associated with high levels of satisfaction from victims,<sup>47</sup> and positive perceptions from offenders regarding repaying the victim and society.<sup>48</sup>

### 3.2 Cognitive Behavioural Therapy

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) is intended to adjust both thoughts and attitudes (cognitions) of the young person, so that this will, in turn, lead to changes in behaviour. CBT approaches are used across a wide range of interventions but they have also been used to develop specific accredited programmes e.g. Reasoning and Rehabilitation (R&R)<sup>49</sup> and Aggression Replacement Training (ART). CBT is also a key component of risk, needs and responsivity approaches (see section 2.2).

A number of international meta-analyses have consistently demonstrated that, overall, CBT approaches produce some of the largest effects on reducing reoffending in young people when the age range is taken as being up to 25.<sup>50</sup> However, individual evaluations that have considered the effects on young people just up to age 18 have produced more equivocal findings regarding reoffending outcomes.<sup>51</sup> Some of the variance in outcome may be associated with young people's abilities to respond to the intervention. Findings from an international evaluation demonstrated that younger boys had better outcomes with more structured, less interactive forms of cognitive behavioural therapy whilst older boys had better outcomes when this was supplemented with more interactive, group based processing.<sup>52</sup>

Other international evaluations have demonstrated positive effects in the community. For example, participation in a group community based CBT programme resulted in fewer

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<sup>46</sup> Bergseth & Bouffard, 2013 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>47</sup> See for example, Strang et al., 2013 (meta-analysis).

<sup>48</sup> Kim & Gerber, 2012 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>49</sup> R&R was originally developed for adults, but has since been adapted for use with young people.

<sup>50</sup> See for example, Lipsey, 2009 (meta-analysis); Koehler et al., 2013b (meta-analysis). These systematic reviews and meta-analyses should strictly be out of scope for this project. As, however, they are a recent assessment of the evidence base they have been included here for completeness.

<sup>51</sup> See for example, Ford & Hawke, 2012 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2); Mitchell & Palmer, 2004 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2). Note that both these studies involved CBT administered to young people whilst in custody.

<sup>52</sup> Martsch, 2005 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2).



criminal charges compared to comparison groups.<sup>53</sup> However, in England, a small scale evaluation of R&R in young people in custody did not reveal any significant differences in reconviction or re-imprisonment between those who received R&R and those who did not.<sup>54</sup>

Table 3.2 summarises the cost estimates in relation to ART. They are based on international impact evidence and the Dartington Social Research Unit has recalculated the USA costs using information from the UK.<sup>55</sup> Taken together, they suggest that ART yields a net benefit of £26,253 and a low to medium risk of loss to the investor (13%).<sup>56</sup>

**Table 3.2 Benefit-cost estimates (UK): Aggression Replacement Training (ART)**

Intervention	Cost	Total benefits	Benefits minus costs	Benefit cost ratio	Rate of return on investment	Risk of loss
ART	£1,262	£27,515	£26,253	£21.80	806%	13%

Another American programme, EQUIP,<sup>57</sup> was implemented in secure settings and was designed to introduce a higher degree of therapeutic intervention. It initially demonstrated improvement on proxy indicators of reduced recidivism, such as improved social skills, and the rate of reoffending was significantly reduced in the EQUIP group at 12 months post-release compared to control groups.<sup>58</sup> However, a subsequent trial, which also involved longer follow up, showed that EQUIP may have contributed to faster times to re-offend than in the comparison group.<sup>59</sup>

There are some innovative modes of support that have been developed to supplement CBT. One technique centres on an automated phone coach system where young people typically receive two calls a day for a year, and answer questions to help monitor and support their progress.<sup>60</sup> Initial studies provide indicative evidence that such an approach can reduce reoffending in young people; however sample sizes were small and other potential explanations for the findings (e.g. increased internal motivation) cannot be ruled out.<sup>61</sup>

<sup>53</sup> Jewell et al., 2013 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>54</sup> Mitchell & Palmer, 2004 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2; sample size of 62).

<sup>55</sup> The Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013; cost-benefit analysis is based on the economic model developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in the USA.

<sup>56</sup> See Glossary (Appendix A) 'Cost-benefit analysis and estimate' section for an explanation of the terms included in the table.

<sup>57</sup> EQUIP addresses cognitive distortions, anger management, moral development and social skills. Part of the EQUIP training programme is based on Aggression Replacement Training (ART).

<sup>58</sup> Leeman et al., 1993 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>59</sup> Brugman & Bink, 2011; (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>60</sup> Burraston et al., 2012 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>61</sup> Burraston et al., 2013 (MSMS design 3, EPPI overall 3).

### 3.3 Motivational Interviewing

Motivational Interviewing (MI) is a form of collaborative dialogue between a practitioner and client. It is typically used with individuals who are ambivalent about taking steps to change certain behaviours. It is a technique that is used to help individuals confront the consequences of their actions and decisions whilst being guided through ways to resolve challenges. It is possible to combine MI with other practices such as CBT. International systematic reviews and meta-analyses have shown that MI can outperform traditional advice giving for a broad range of behavioural problems (e.g. smoking, alcohol misuse, drug taking, physical exercise and eating habits) among clients of both genders of various ages, including adolescents.<sup>62</sup>

Based on the small number of studies reviewed, there is promising international evidence which supports the use of MI for young people who offend. In a wide ranging Randomised Controlled Trial (RCT) in the USA, training was provided to probation case managers covering a number of evidence based practices to engage young people (e.g. MI and OARS (Open ended questions, Affirmations, Reflective listening, Summarizations)).<sup>63</sup> When staff were provided with enhanced training in these methods, the young people they supervised showed lower rates of recidivism over a 12 month period. Furthermore, a pilot programme in California found that young people were more engaged and satisfied with MI when it was run alongside treatment as usual, and outcomes were similar.<sup>64</sup>

### 3.4 Mentoring

Although definitions of mentoring interventions vary in the literature, it usually involves meetings between a young person and a positive role model (mentor) who can provide guidance and support to the young person.

A number of recent reviews and meta-analyses of mentoring interventions have reported small but significant reductions in anti-social or offending behaviour<sup>65</sup> and reoffending.<sup>66</sup> Given, however, the variability of the type of scheme implemented, the limited detail included in studies of what mentoring activity involved and what were the key characteristics for

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<sup>62</sup> Systematic reviews and meta-analyses included for context. See for example, Rubak et al., 2005; Lundahl & Burke, 2009. Motivational Interviewing is probably not applicable to very young children or those with reduced cognitive capacity, as with other therapies that require evaluation or insight.

<sup>63</sup> Young et al., 2012 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>64</sup> D'Amico et al., 2013 (MSMS design 5, EPPI overall 2).

<sup>65</sup> Tolan et al., 2008; 2013 (meta-analysis).

<sup>66</sup> Joliffe & Farrington, 2008 (review).

successful implementation a degree of caution must be applied when interpreting findings. Mindful of this, the findings should be regarded as promising.

Positive recidivism outcomes were reported in the Tolan et al., 2013 international meta-analysis of mentoring initiatives, although there was wide variation in outcomes across the included studies. This analysis compared the effect of mentoring on delinquency (including offending and anti-social behaviour), aggression, drug use and academic functioning and found that the strongest effects were for reducing delinquency. A rapid review and meta-analysis by Jolliffe and Farrington (2008) similarly reported some positive outcomes: mentoring was found to reduce reoffending by between four and 10 per cent.

Mentoring has been implemented throughout the criminal justice pathway but there is some evidence that it is most likely to be effective when used early on in a young person's potential offending career.<sup>67</sup> Qualitative evidence suggests that mentoring may be more effective with young people at the cautioning stage than with persistent young offenders with particularly chaotic lifestyles.<sup>68</sup> The national evaluation of the Youth Justice Board Mentoring Schemes, which ran between 2001 and 2004, failed to find any reduction in offending for a sample of mentees in comparison to a matched control group. One of the recommendations resulting from this evaluation was that delivering mentoring to young age groups who were at risk of offending may be more effective.<sup>69</sup>

The strength of the mentoring relationship seems to be a critical factor in reducing reoffending. An international meta-analysis<sup>70</sup> found stronger effects when emotional support was emphasised within mentoring interventions. Where meetings lasted longer and took place once a week (as opposed to less frequently), mentoring had a greater effect on reducing re-offending. More equivocal findings have also been noted where mentoring relationships break down.<sup>71</sup>

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<sup>67</sup> Jolliffe & Farrington, 2008 (systematic review).

<sup>68</sup> Tarling et al., 2004 (review).

<sup>69</sup> St James-Roberts et al., (2005) (MSMS design 3, EPPI overall 3)

<sup>70</sup> Tolan et al., 2013 (meta-analysis).

<sup>71</sup> Tarling et al., 2004 (review).

There is some evidence suggesting that stand alone mentoring may not be as effective as mentoring delivered as part of a wider set of interventions.<sup>72</sup> However, most studies included in the synthesis did not consider mentoring in isolation from other interventions. A study by Blechman et al.,<sup>73</sup> did compare intervention components by assigning young people to diversion, diversion plus skills training,<sup>74</sup> or diversion plus mentoring. The diversion plus skills training intervention led to a significant reduction in reoffending, with 37 per cent of young people re-arrested in comparison to 51 per cent in the diversion plus mentoring group. Cost-effectiveness analysis showed that when skills training was used in preference to mentoring, savings were found to be in the region of \$336 per young person.<sup>75</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Jolliffe & Farrington, 2008 (systematic review).

<sup>73</sup> Blechman et al., 2000 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>74</sup> Those assigned to skills training received weekly 2 hour long classes involving anger management, personal responsibility, and decision making classes (for 4 weeks).

<sup>75</sup> Blechman et al., 2000 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3).

## 4. Intervention effectiveness within specific youth justice settings

### Summary of findings

The following interventions and approaches, based on international evidence, can be considered at specific stages and contexts within the youth justice rehabilitation setting to reduce reoffending.

- Diversionary approaches may be appropriate for young people who commit low level offences given that some will desist from crime without intervention and drawing these young people into the formal youth justice system may increase their offending.
- Within the community, family based therapeutic interventions that draw on the community and consider wider offender needs can be effective and deliver a positive net return on investment.
- Community based interventions tend to be more effective than custody. Where custody is necessary, consideration should be given in some cases to moving young people to well trained foster carers. Young people in custody are likely to require intensive support to help them to desist from offending.
- Good quality supervision in custody also requires planning for release and resettlement to be an integral part of the sentence. Brokers or advocates who will help guide young people through transition and be available whenever needed are worth considering.
- Prison visitation programmes aimed at young people at risk of offending were not found to reduce offending behaviour; indeed, findings show that they can increase the likelihood of committing crime. Also, military style 'boot camps' run as an alternative to custody were not found to reduce reoffending.

In this section, findings are structured according to the pathway through the youth justice system. The aim is to aid practitioners and policy makers to navigate to interventions in specific youth justice contexts. Findings are presented for the following key stages: diversion away from courts; courts and sentencing; family and community interventions; secure settings; and post custodial release resettlement.

## 4.1 Diversion

This section focuses on diversionary interventions where the aim is to avoid, or minimise, formal processing by the criminal or youth justice system. Several studies have suggested that diverting young people away from the criminal justice system can be effective in reducing reoffending; however, the evidence is mixed. There is considerable variation in the design, aims, content and delivery of youth justice diversion programmes, and the nature of comparison groups drawn upon in evaluations, which may limit the overall conclusions that can be drawn about such schemes.

Findings from the Edinburgh Study of Youth Transitions, which is a longitudinal study of young people who have offended, has produced results which are helpful to understand why diversion schemes are worth considering for some young people. Findings showed that, after controlling for other factors, young people who become known to the criminal justice system and social services tend to be slower to desist from crime than those who are similarly involved in criminal behaviour and do not become known to these services.<sup>76</sup> This may possibly be explained by a 'labelling effect'<sup>77</sup> where those known to the police and social services may be subject to more surveillance, which could in turn reinforce criminal identities and pathways.

In addition, an international meta-analysis<sup>78</sup> examined the effect of any formal criminal justice sanction in comparison to diversions that avoided the youth justice system. The authors concluded that '*juvenile system processing appears to not have a crime control effect, and across all measures appears to increase delinquency*' (p6). The negative impact of formal system processing was greater in those studies that compared results to a diversion programme rather than comparing system processing to release without additional support.

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<sup>76</sup> McAra & McVie, 2007. Study included for context.

<sup>77</sup> See for example, Goffman, 1963. Study included for context.

<sup>78</sup> Petrosino et al., 2010 (meta-analysis) Studies included in the meta-analysis compared traditional system processing (any condition involving official processing) to alternative conditions where young people had not been officially adjudicated e.g. release, counsel and release, diversion, or diversion with services. It should be noted that three quarters of the studies included were from between 1973 and 1990. Also, their consideration of diversion was heavily influenced by a particularly rigorous and well implemented set of diversion schemes (not restricted to first time offenders) in the USA.

Further meta-analyses have, however, produced conflicting results regarding diversionary practices. Some differences may be explained by variations in definitions of diversion and methodology. Schwalbe et al., (2012)<sup>79</sup> found that, overall, the effects of diversion programmes on reoffending were not significant. However, this review highlighted the wide variation in programme design, and quality of monitoring and implementation, leading to a wide range of effects on reoffending. Further sub-analyses, by diversion programme type, indicated that family and restorative justice interventions were associated with reductions in reoffending.

In contrast, an international meta-analysis by Wilson and Hoge (2012) found that diversion of young people, either via cautioning or warning and release (and, therefore, no further intervention), or intervention programmes, produced greater reductions in reoffending than traditional processing e.g. probation.<sup>80</sup> Analysis also showed an interaction between the type of diversionary program and the risk level of the young person: diversion via caution or warning and release was more effective for low risk young people than diversion via an intervention programme. Diversion via intervention programme was more effective in medium or high risk young people than those considered low risk (in accordance with RNR principles; see section 2.2).

In an international systematic review of pre-sentencing interventions,<sup>81</sup> there was good evidence for personal skills training plus reparation to reduce the risk of re-offending in first time or non serious offenders, when compared against a diversion intervention comprising warning and monitoring.<sup>82</sup> However, analysis from a diversionary scheme in Australia demonstrated that young people who were diverted from a youth court (via police cautioning) had better reoffending outcomes than those who were not diverted, regardless of whether it was their first, second or third contact with the justice system.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> Schwalbe et al., 2012 (meta-analysis) International studies included compared at least one active treatment condition against a minimal intervention or standard justice processing condition. Included 28 studies covering the following programme types: case management, individual treatment, family treatment, youth court, and restorative justice. Participants were referred to diversion by law enforcement or the juvenile justice system prior to adjudication. The interventions was not restricted to first time offenders.

<sup>80</sup> Wilson & Hoge, 2012 (meta-analysis). Diversion was defined broadly as any program that avoided official processing prior to a charge, full prosecution after charge, or a traditional sentence (e.g. imprisonment) after conviction. The intervention was not restricted to first time offenders.

<sup>81</sup> Defined here as interventions conducted after a young offender has been found guilty but before they formally enter into the criminal justice system.

<sup>82</sup> Newman et al., 2012 (systematic review).

<sup>83</sup> Little, 2014 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3).

In England and Wales, the Youth Justice Liaison and Diversion scheme was introduced in 2009 with the aim of diverting offenders with mental health and communication or learning difficulties from the youth justice system to appropriate services.<sup>84</sup> The scheme was piloted in six areas and an evaluation indicated that those in the scheme were slower to reoffend and had significant reductions in reported depression and self-harm compared to a matched comparison group. However, overall rates of reoffending were similar between the intervention and comparison sites.<sup>85</sup>

## 4.2 Court setting

This section considers findings when the court process itself constitutes an intervention different from a standard court hearing. Two specialist courts that have been developed in the USA are youth drug courts and teen courts.

Drug courts vary in nature but, in general, require the young person to comply with a programme and supervision, with judges being closely involved throughout sentence disposal to ensure that meaningful, specialised and multifaceted interventions are allocated. Specific components of the drug court model include random drug testing, incentives, rewards, and sanctions. There is strong evidence for drug courts, based on meta-analysis of USA studies, showing that crime outcomes can be reduced and a positive net return on investment can be delivered.<sup>86</sup>

Table 4.1 summarises the cost estimates in relation to Drug Courts. They are based on international impact evidence and the Dartington Social Research Unit has recalculated the USA costs using information from the UK.<sup>87</sup> Taken together, they suggest that drug courts can yield a net benefit of £11,294 and a low risk of loss to the investor (5%).<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>84</sup> 'Triage' schemes were also introduced in 2009 in England and Wales with the aim of diverting young people who had a non-serious first offence or reoffence, away from formal sanctions (used where the young person has admitted to the offence). Limited evaluation design means that it has not been possible to establish impact however e.g. Institute for Criminal Policy Research (ICPR), 2012 (MSMS, 2; EPPI, 3). Included for context.

<sup>85</sup> Haines et al., 2012 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3); Haines et al., 2014 (technically out of scope as beyond timeframe of review, but included as important update to the 2012 evaluation).

<sup>86</sup> See for example, Aos & Drake, 2013 (meta-analysis); Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis).

<sup>87</sup> The Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013 cost-benefit analysis is based on the economic model developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in the USA.

<sup>88</sup> See Glossary (Appendix A) 'Cost-benefit analysis and estimate' section for an explanation of the terms included in the table.



**Table 4.1 Benefit-cost estimates (UK): Drug Courts**

Intervention	Cost	Total benefits	Benefits minus costs	Benefit - cost ratio	Rate of return on investment	Risk of loss
Drug Courts	£2,471	£13,765	£11,294	£5.57	42%	5%

Teen Courts also vary in detail but are generally where young people staff the court, with one adult employee or volunteer performing an inquisitorial role. Again, international meta-analysis<sup>89</sup> has demonstrated that, on average, these types of courts can reduce crime rates.

Girls' and young women's courts have also been implemented across several American States. However, the only evaluation that met the criteria of this review was that of the Honolulu Girls' Court.<sup>90</sup> The Honolulu Girls' Court is a gender-specific, problem solving court for girls who offend as well as those engaging in risky behaviours. The court runs every five weeks in all female sessions; social work and probation staff work with court staff to determine appropriate services and support.<sup>91</sup> Evaluation findings were mixed and, given the small sample size,<sup>92</sup> should be treated with caution.

There were no significant differences between those attending the Girls' Court and a comparison group in the number of offences committed in the follow up period (between one and four and a half years). However, participants had fewer admissions and days spent in a youth correctional facility compared to the comparison group. There was, however, more use of a detention home<sup>93</sup> for Girls' Court participants perhaps due to additional supervision and contact with court staff as a consequence of the intervention.

### 4.3 Sentencing

Studies were found that explored the effects of different criminal justice sentence disposals on young people's reoffending rates. However, most studies did not consider how young people are managed during the sentences and, therefore, caution needs to be applied when considering some findings. Overall, UK and international studies present promising evidence that community sentences can offer similar or better outcomes when compared with custodial sentences in terms of reoffending, and may do so more cost-effectively.

<sup>89</sup> See for example, Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis).

<sup>90</sup> Davidson et al., 2011 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3). The Honolulu Girls' Court has its own website with several links and additional resources <http://www.girlscourt.org/resources.html>.

<sup>91</sup> Hearings are held in 'open session' i.e. the girls and young women hear one another's stories and potentially learn from one another. Parents are also mandated to be in the court and to attend subsequent sessions of a parenting group, and their daughters attend regular group sessions.

<sup>92</sup> Approximately 50 who had gone through the court, and 50 matched controls.

<sup>93</sup> A form of secure accommodation for at risk young people.

A study by the Ministry of Justice<sup>94</sup> assessed the relative effectiveness of a range of youth justice sentences by constructing matched offender groups to compare proven re-offending rates. Indicative findings showed that young people who received a lower level community sentence had a statistically significant lower re-offending rate when compared with those sentenced to a higher level community disposal. Those receiving a custodial sentence of six months or shorter had a slightly higher re-offending rate than those receiving a high level community sentence. Furthermore, there was no overall significant difference in reoffending rates for young offenders given a custodial sentence of six to 12 months and those given shorter custodial sentences. Evidence from a longitudinal study of young offenders in the USA also indicates that longer periods of detention are not likely to increase rates of desistance.<sup>95</sup>

In the USA, a randomised controlled trial was conducted comparing intensive community based supervision to custody. Although recidivism appeared unaffected, the intensive community surveillance was more cost effective.<sup>96</sup> In a separate analysis, Wiebush (1993) estimated a saving of \$4670 per youthful felony offender diverted from institutional settings to the community.<sup>97</sup> Similarly, Fass and Pi considered the costs and benefits of applying disposals of one level of increased severity to offenders in Dallas, Texas. They calculated unit values for the justice system, monetised actual and social costs and benefits to victims and others, and concluded that '*harsher sanctions do not produce positive net benefits for the justice system*' (p.383).<sup>98</sup>

An evaluation assessed the impact of the Intensive Supervision and Surveillance Programme (ISSP),<sup>99</sup> an enhanced form of community based supervision in England and Wales. ISSP (later known as Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS)) was originally targeted at persistent and, (from 2002) serious offenders who were at risk of being sentenced to custody. The evaluation assessed a 10 year follow up period for young people sentenced to the ISSP order and a matched comparison group who had received a range of other disposals. Despite a steep downward trend in the frequency and seriousness of offending for the ISSP group, very similar patterns were identified in the comparison sample, and there

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<sup>94</sup> Ministry of Justice, 2012 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3). This study was based on administrative data from the Police National Computer (PNC) for all young people aged 10 to 17 sentenced to a youth justice disposal between 2005 to 2009. A statistical technique called Propensity Score Matching (PSM) was used to compare different youth justice sentences and their relative impact of proven reoffending.

<sup>95</sup> Mulvey, 2011 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>96</sup> Barton & Butts, 1990 (MSMS design 5, EPPI overall 2; a large scale, RCT).

<sup>97</sup> Wiebush, 1993 (MSMS design 4, EPPI overall 3).

<sup>98</sup> Fass & Pi, 2002 (fiscal review paper).

<sup>99</sup> Gray, 2013 (MSMS design 3, EPPI overall 3).

were no long term differences between the groups after the programme ended. However, the results showed there were some differences in the intervention and comparison groups that may have affected the results. The authors concluded that '*ISSP appeared to have provided cost-effective and robust provision for young offenders, where custody might otherwise have been considered the most appropriate criminal justice response*' (p.9).

#### 4.4 Community sentencing requirements

Beyond 'traditional' community supervision, studies have looked at other approaches including nature or wilderness based programmes and interventions encouraging creativity, through music or drama.<sup>100</sup> The evidence on the effectiveness of these interventions is limited and mixed. The most promising evidence on effectiveness focuses on wilderness based programmes and suggests that they can offer similar long term outcomes to traditional community based programmes.

A very small scale randomized controlled trial of 'Project Explore'<sup>101</sup> in the USA looked at status and criminal offences over a two year follow up period.<sup>102</sup> They found no significant difference between the programme and standard probation services, and concluded that the programme was no more effective than probation services that '*allow caseworkers regular and meaningful contacts with clients*' (p. 258).

A quasi-experimental evaluation of an Outward Bound programme was conducted in Illinois, USA.<sup>103</sup> A reduction in one year recidivism was found for those who completed the programme, but this effect had dissipated after two years. Similarly, a quasi-experimental evaluation which compared the outcomes for young people placed on the Michigan Nokomis Challenge Programme<sup>104</sup> to a matched group sentenced to traditional residential placements (e.g. training schools or private residential programmes) found that, over a 24 month period, the programme showed significant cost savings. There were, however, few differences in social adjustment, substance abuse or recidivism outcomes between the two groups.<sup>105</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> These are conceptualised in the literature as being diversions away from custody although as they are post court, they are considered here.

<sup>101</sup> Consisting of outdoor adventure, social skills training, and parent skills training.

<sup>102</sup> Elrod & Minor, 1992 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>103</sup> Castellano & Soderstrom, 1992 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>104</sup> Provides three months of residential outdoor challenges and nine months of intensive community based aftercare.

<sup>105</sup> Deschenes & Greenwood, 1998 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

Looking beyond wilderness programmes, qualitative studies have indicated that young people and staff involved in music and drama programmes have reported positive findings in terms of resilience and peer interactions.<sup>106</sup> However, due to the design or quality of the studies, limited conclusions regarding the efficacy of such programmes can be drawn.<sup>107</sup> Short term improvements on cognitive functioning and recidivism have been suggested by previous studies; however, findings were again not robust.<sup>108</sup>

## 4.5 Family and community interventions

There is evidence that poor parenting skills can be associated with an increased risk of antisocial behaviour and the onset of offending among young people.<sup>109</sup> Various types of family based interventions aim to strengthen the role of the family and wider community in the provision of support to young people who offend. Several international reviews and meta-analyses conclude that family based interventions can bring about successful outcomes relating to the onset and continuation of criminal behaviour. Outcomes can include less time incarcerated and lower recidivism, as well as offering cost benefits.<sup>110</sup>

Furthermore, family based licenced programmes have also demonstrated that they can, based on a number of international meta-analyses, reduce reoffending among young people and can also offer a positive net return on investment. Programme fidelity (implementation) is important if benefits from these programmes are to be realised. Also, most of the evaluations for these interventions are international, with the majority originating from the USA, and, therefore, more research needs to be undertaken in England and Wales to test whether similar results can be achieved. Finally, it must be kept in mind that family based programmes may be neither appropriate, nor sufficient for all young people; for example, some young people will not be in contact (for whatever reason) with their parents and families.

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<sup>106</sup> Barrett & Baker, 2012 (qualitative; EPPI overall 2); Norton & Holguin, 2011 (qualitative; EPPI overall 2, a small scale, qualitative study).

<sup>107</sup> Barrett & Baker, 2012 (qualitative; EPPI overall 2); Castellano & Soderstrom, 1992 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3); Deschenes & Greenwood, 1998 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3); Norton & Holguin, 2011 (EPPI overall 2; a small scale (n=4) qualitative study); Hughes, 2003 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3). Indicative findings based on a very small scale reconviction study.

<sup>108</sup> Elrod & Minor 1992 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>109</sup> See for example, Farrington & Welsh, 2007 (meta-analyses); Andrews & Bonta, 2010 (systematic reviews and meta-analyses); Petrosino et al., (2010) (meta-analysis). Reviews included for context.

<sup>110</sup> For example, see: Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis); Aos & Drake, 2013 (meta-analysis); Henggeler & Sheidow, 2012 (systematic review); Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013 (systematic review) and Woolfenden et al., 2002 (meta-analysis); Petrosino et al., (2010) (meta-analysis).

A number of these licensed family based programmes are set out below.

#### 4.5.1 Multisystemic Therapy

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is an intensive home based and family driven intervention for young people aged 12 to 18 years. It is designed to address complex psychosocial problems and provide alternatives to out of home placements for young people. Specially trained therapists work with young people and their families to address the known causes of delinquency on an individualised, yet comprehensive basis. MST draws upon the issues and strengths in each 'system' (e.g. family, peers, school, and neighbourhood) to facilitate change. Therapists generally spend more time with families in the initial weeks (daily if needed) and gradually reduce their time over the three to five month course of support.

There is strong international evidence, based on several reviews and meta-analyses from a number of countries, which shows that MST can reduce youth reoffending and can deliver positive net returns on investment (see Table 4.2).<sup>111</sup> Evaluations have demonstrated positive impacts on reoffending when MST is utilised with specific groups of young offenders, including 'serious and violent' offenders,<sup>112</sup> young people convicted of sexual offences,<sup>113</sup> and young offenders with substance misuse problems.<sup>114</sup> This includes one study of serious and violent young offenders<sup>115</sup> where, at almost 22 years post intervention, reoffending rates by MST participants were significantly lower than those of comparators receiving 'individual therapy'.<sup>116</sup>

Whilst meta-analyses show MST can reduce reoffending, results from some early international single studies<sup>117</sup> and meta-analysis<sup>118</sup> have led to discussion on the way MST programmes are implemented and the importance of programme fidelity if benefits are to be realised. Of relevance here is that a significant proportion of the evidence on MST interventions has been published by the programme originators, which may possibly have

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<sup>111</sup> For example, Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis); Aos & Drake, 2013 (meta-analysis); Henggeler & Sheidow, 2012 (systematic review); SRU, 2012 (meta-analyses).

<sup>112</sup> Borduin et al., 1995 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3); with follow up studies: Schaeffer & Borduin, 2005 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3); Sawyer & Borduin 2011 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>113</sup> Borduin et al., 2009 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>114</sup> Henggeler et al., 1999 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 2), followed up in Henggeler et al., 2002 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>115</sup> Henggeler et al., 2002 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3); Borduin et al., 1995 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>116</sup> Sawyer & Borduin, 2011 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>117</sup> Leschied & Cunningham, 2002 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3) (Study of MST delivery in Canada. Also cited in Farrington & Welsh, 2005 (meta-analysis)).

<sup>118</sup> See Littell et al., 2005 (meta-analysis of international studies); Henggeler et al., 2006 (response to Littell et al., meta-analysis. Included for context).

resulted in larger effect sizes, due potentially to high levels of programme fidelity.<sup>119</sup> MST results can also vary depending on the legal, sentencing and social welfare frameworks adopted in the countries in which it is implemented.<sup>120</sup>

One relatively small scale implementation of MST in the UK observed lower rates of non-violent offending behaviour among MST participants at 18 months post intervention compared to young people who received fairly intensive YOT interventions.<sup>121</sup>

#### **4.5.2 Functional Family Therapy**

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is a family based therapy intervention and youth diversion programme helping young people, aged 11 to 18 years, who have conduct disorder, substance abuse and delinquency issues. Trained therapists work with families to assess family behaviours, modify dysfunctional family communication, train family members to negotiate effectively, set clear rules about privileges and responsibilities, and generalise changes to community contexts and relationships. FFT may be coupled with other services such as remedial education, job training and placement and school placement.

A number of international reviews and meta-analyses provide strong evidence that FFT can deliver reductions in youth reoffending and offers a positive net return on investment (see Table 3.4).<sup>122</sup> Studies have been conducted in a number of states across the USA. FFT has been applied successfully with a wide range of population demographics and in a number of contexts (e.g. in state institutions and with young offenders in the community under supervision).<sup>123</sup>

#### **4.5.3 Treatment Foster Care Oregon**

Treatment Foster Care Oregon (TFCO) (formerly known as Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care), is an alternative to residential placement (including custody) for chronic young delinquents who have a long history with the youth court system. It requires that only one young person be placed with a foster family at a time, with specialised training of foster parents and close supervision and support. Placement in foster parent homes typically last

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<sup>119</sup> MST originators Charles Borduin and Scott Henggeler, from the USA.

<sup>120</sup> See Olsson, 2010 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3) Study of MST delivery in Sweden. The legal and welfare framework (and how they respond to young people who display delinquent and some offending behaviour) in Sweden is different to most states in the USA.

<sup>121</sup> Butler et al., 2011 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>122</sup> Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis); Aos & Drake, 2013 (meta-analysis).

<sup>123</sup> For example, Gordon et al, 1995 (MSMS design 3; EPPI 2).

for about six months. Aftercare services remain in place for as long as the parents want, but typically last about one year.

There is strong international evidence, based on a number of reviews and meta-analyses, which demonstrate that TFCO can reduce youth offending outcomes and deliver a positive net return on investment (see Table 4.2).<sup>124</sup> A number of the randomised controlled trials conducted in Oregon (in the USA) identified improved outcomes relating to criminal behaviour (typically rates of arrest and number of days in detention) over one or two years for individuals who participated in TFCO rather than Group Care placements. TFCO has been found to be effective for boys<sup>125</sup> and for girls,<sup>126</sup> although one early study noted less pronounced success with younger girls.<sup>127</sup> The TFCO approach was subsequently further adapted to address trauma and offending simultaneously among young female offenders, and one study then found improved outcomes in both domains.<sup>128,129</sup>

Table 4.2 summarises the cost estimates in relation to MST, TFCO, and FFT. They are based on international impact evidence and the Dartington Social Research Unit has recalculated the USA costs using information from the UK.<sup>130</sup> Taken together they suggest that MST, TFCO, and FFT can yield net benefits of £10,161, £12,792 and £20,017 respectively. The corresponding risk of loss to the investor was 13 per cent, 22 per cent and one per cent respectively.<sup>131</sup>

**Table 4.2 Benefit-cost analysis estimates (UK): Family and community programmes**

Intervention	Cost	Total benefits	Benefits minus costs	Benefit - cost ratio	Rate of return on investment	Risk of loss
MST	£9,732	£19,893	£10,161	£2.04	16%	13%
TFCO	£7,821	£20,613	£12,792	£2.64	24%	22%
FFT	£3,465	£31,482	£20,017	£9.09	85%	1%

<sup>124</sup> See for example, Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis); Henggeler & Sheidow, 2012 (systematic review); Allen, G. (systematic review).

<sup>125</sup> Chamberlain & Moore 1998 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 2); Chamberlain & Reid 1998 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>126</sup> Leve et al., 2012 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>127</sup> Chamberlain et al., 2007 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>128</sup> Smith et al., 2012 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>129</sup> A less robust study explored the use of TFCO (then known as MTFC) for girls in England and Wales. It suggested that offending behaviour had reduced post placement. However, not all participants had a history of offending, many were still under parental supervision and outcome measures were either reported by caregivers or taken from case files. See Rhoades et al., 2013 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>130</sup> The Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013 cost-benefit analysis is based on the economic model developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in the USA.

<sup>131</sup> See Glossary (Appendix A) 'Cost-benefit analysis and estimate' section for an explanation of the terms included in the table.



#### 4.5.4 Parent training programmes

Parent training programmes are usually narrower in scope and more time limited than the family based interventions set out above. Whilst there is good evidence that this approach can produce improved behavioural outcomes for parents with pre-school children,<sup>132</sup> the interventions reviewed in this section assess whether these positive changes can be reproduced for adolescents.

Overall, there is promising evidence regarding the efficacy of parenting programmes. There was, however, some variation in the nature of the programme and the type of offender targeted and, therefore, a degree of caution needs to be applied when interpreting findings.

One early American evaluation found that while there were few differences in recidivism outcomes at one and two year follow ups, parenting training delivered faster reductions in offending behaviour over the same time span, with fewer days of incarceration compared to the control group. The staff, however, found the intervention emotionally challenging to deliver.<sup>133</sup> Also, an evaluation of the Family Empowerment Intervention (FEI) in the USA, concluded that young people completing the time limited programme had significantly lower total charges and arrest rates at 12 months post intervention; however, at 24 months the findings were not significant.<sup>134</sup>

Another American approach, 'WayOUT' or Coordination of Services (CoS) provides an educational programme to low risk youth offenders and their parents. Families may self refer or be mandated to attend by a court. It runs over two consecutive weekends and provides education and skills in areas including parenting, communication, building strengths and conflict resolution. A meta-analysis (based on two studies from the USA) has demonstrated its effectiveness in reducing reoffending<sup>135</sup> and the programme has generated a high positive net return on investment.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>132</sup> See for example, Allen, 2011. International systematic review, included here for context. This and other reviews have found strong international evidence for early years parenting interventions such as Triple P, which is a multi-level parenting programme designed to prevent the development of serious behavioural and emotional problems in children.

<sup>133</sup> Bank et al., 1991, p15 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>134</sup> Dembo et al., 2000 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3) and 2001 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>135</sup> Barnoski & Aos, 2004 (meta-analysis).

<sup>136</sup> Washington State Institute for Public Policy (July 2015) Benefit-costs for juvenile justice. A benefit-cost estimate analysis reported benefits minus costs of \$9,202, a benefit-cost ratio of \$23.34 with a 96 per cent chance that the benefits of the intervention will outweigh the costs of implementation



Furthermore, recent evidence<sup>137</sup> reminds us that consideration should also be given to the wider offending related context and community environments that can influence parenting efficacy.

## 4.6 Secure settings

In the reviewed literature, the nature and context of secure settings varied and it was often challenging to make direct comparisons to the youth secure estate in England and Wales.<sup>138</sup> Therefore, a degree of caution should be applied when interpreting findings and applying them to an English and Welsh context.

Meta-analyses by Lipsey suggested that for young people serving custodial sentences, the characteristics of programmes, such as the type, length and intensity (dosage) can play a greater role in influencing the outcome of the intervention than the characteristics of the offender. Of particular note was the longevity of the programme and by whom it was administered, irrespective of the individual characteristics of the young people. Interpersonal skills programmes (i.e. training in social skills, CBT, aggression replacement and anger control and cognitive restructuring) provided very promising outcomes in institutional and residential settings.<sup>139,140</sup>

An evaluation from North America compared reoffending following random assignment of young people to different forms of secure accommodation (a traditional training school versus a residential programme, the Paint Creek Youth Centre).<sup>141</sup> Although findings appeared favourable towards the residential programme, there were no significant differences in reoffending between the groups.<sup>142</sup> When secure, restrictive custodial settings were compared to alternative sanctions delivered within the community, without a detention requirement (e.g. foster homes, group homes); findings have also been somewhat equivocal. Those in alternative programme placements were found to have a significantly longer time

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<sup>137</sup> Diamond et al., 2011. (MSMS design 1; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>138</sup> The sectors of the youth secure estate in England and Wales are: Under 18 Young Offender Institutions (Under 18 YOIs) for 15 to 17 year old males; Secure Training Centres (STCs) for 12 to 17 year olds; and Secure Children's Homes (SCHs) for 10 to 17 year olds. See Ministry of Justice 2013 for an overview.

<sup>139</sup> Lipsey et al., 2000; 2009 (meta-analysis).

Access to CBT related programmes varied across the English and Welsh youth secure estate. Provision was, on the whole, more likely in Secure Training Centres (STCs) and least likely in under 18 Young Offender Institutions (YOIs). All secure settings reported that it can be difficult to provide interventions when young people are sentenced to fewer than six months. See Gyang et al., 2013 (MSMS design 1; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>141</sup> Training schools are secure, restrictive custody programmes in an institutional setting. The Paint Creek Youth Centre was of small size (30-35 young people) with no locked doors/fences. It was developed: "to provide a comprehensive array of high-quality programming tailored to the individual requirements of youths".

<sup>142</sup> Greenwood & Turner, 1993 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

until re-offence compared to young people in secure settings; however, there was no impact on the overall rate of reoffending.<sup>143</sup>

There is some limited evidence from an evaluation of an American small scale residential rehabilitation unit<sup>144</sup> that when offender needs are properly acknowledged and addressed and when families are well integrated, positive outcomes seem to be demonstrated. The evaluation demonstrated that length of stay was associated with a lower risk of reoffending, although a lack of comparison group means that findings must be interpreted with caution.<sup>145</sup>

Qualitative research has shown that well qualified staff were perceived as necessary but not sufficient to engender a positive culture within a residential setting. When staff groups are cohesive and understanding of how their different styles of interacting can influence the young people in their care, residential cultures can be improved.<sup>146</sup>

## **4.7 Prison visits to deter young people from offending**

Interventions involving visits by young people at risk of offending or who were already committing crime to see the reality of prison life and lifestyle criminality in programmes such as Scared Straight have been shown not to work. A number of meta-analyses based on studies from the USA have demonstrated that the intervention can result in an increased likelihood of offending among young people.<sup>147</sup> It has been suggested by academics that the confrontational style of these programmes may contribute to negative effects.<sup>148</sup>

Table 4.3 summarises the cost estimates in relation to Scared Straight. They are based on international impact evidence and the Dartington Social Research Unit has recalculated the USA costs using information from the UK.<sup>149</sup> Taken together, they suggest that Scared Straight interventions can yield a net negative loss of £14,268 and a very high risk of loss to the investor (99%).<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Fendrich & Archer, 1998 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>144</sup> Pilgrim Center, 24 bed unit.

<sup>145</sup> McMackin et al., 2004 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>146</sup> Ahonen & Degner, 2013 (qualitative; MSMS design 1; EPPI overall 2), Ahonen & Degner, 2012 (qualitative; EPPI overall 3) (both papers are process focussed, rather than outcome based and quantitative information is drawn from survey findings).

<sup>147</sup> Petrosino et al., 2013 (meta-analysis); Aos et al., 2006 (meta-analysis); Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013; WSIPP 2015a; WSIPP 2015b (meta-analyses).

<sup>148</sup> Klenowski et al., 2010 (systematic review).

<sup>149</sup> The Social Research Unit, 2012; 2013 cost-benefit analysis is based on the economic model developed by the Washington State Institute for Public Policy (WSIPP) in the USA.

<sup>150</sup> See Glossary (Appendix A) 'Cost-benefit analysis and estimate' section for an explanation of the terms included in the table.

**Table 4.3 Benefit-cost estimates (UK): Scared Straight**

Intervention	Cost	Total benefits	Benefits minus costs	Benefit - cost ratio	Rate of return on investment	Risk of loss
Scared Straight	£55	-£14,213	-£14,268	-258.42	119%	99%

## 4.8 Boot camps

Alternative models of custody include 'boot camps' that are typically characterised by a militaristic approach, where participants are required to follow a rigorous daily schedule of activities including drill, physical exercise in squads and strict discipline. A number of international systematic reviews<sup>151</sup> concluded that, overall, 'boot camps' did not have an impact on reoffending levels, even if the boot camps included a rehabilitative training element. While the available evidence indicates that boot camps have had little, if any, effect on reoffending, they are typically cheaper to implement than custody.<sup>152</sup>

## 4.9 Transitions and resettlement

Young people in custody can have complex, multi-faceted needs.<sup>153</sup> During resettlement back into the community,<sup>154</sup> young people often face the same issues and challenges they experienced prior to incarceration which may be further exacerbated by the transition process itself.<sup>155</sup> The current international evidence base on transitions and resettlement is limited and mixed, and there is much variation in the design and delivery of programmes which may have affected evaluation results. However, given the issues faced by many young people leaving custody, interventions to support young people post release should be considered as part of rehabilitation planning.

A recent meta-analysis<sup>156</sup> of 30 post custody aftercare studies from the USA indicated that the overall effect was very modest and statistically nonsignificant. That said, sub group analysis showed that well implemented aftercare programmes reduced the risk of reoffending among older young people with violent criminal histories. Significant reductions in further offending were shown for those who were over an average (mean) age of 16.5 years.<sup>157</sup> The

<sup>151</sup> For example, see Wilson et al., 2005 (systematic review). Results are provided for both adult and young offenders and show that overall the likelihood of boot camp participants reoffending was equal to that of the comparison group. This result held for both adults and young people.

<sup>152</sup> Meade & Steiner, 2010 (systematic review).

<sup>153</sup> See for example, Gyateng et al., 2013 (MSMS design 1; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>154</sup> Resettlement is typically defined as the effective reintegration of imprisoned offenders back into the community.

<sup>155</sup> Wright et al., 2013 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>156</sup> Weaver & Campbell (2015). Meta-analysis which although strictly out of scope (due to the publication date) for this REA has been included as highly relevant.

<sup>157</sup> From an England and Wales context, this finding may be important given the rising age profile of children in the secure estate. See for example, Youth Justice Board / Ministry of Justice (2015).

authors speculate that this may be because older adolescents might have greater intellectual capacity to participate in activities and thereby reap the benefits.

The same meta-analysis also found that indicators of effective aftercare programmes included the presence of a professional who demonstrated commitment to the wellbeing of the young people in their care. Conversely, weak implementation was associated with high staff turnover, lower levels of contact between staff and young people than originally anticipated and young people feeling that there was insufficient contact with staff. In interpreting this latter finding, analysis suggested that variations in the frequency of contact had little impact on reoffending; problems appeared to arise where levels of contact were lower than young people had been given to expect.

Consistent with findings reported above, a large scale longitudinal study of young offenders in the USA found that most of the young people in the study stopped offending eventually, irrespective of any intervention.<sup>158</sup> However, they also found that community supervision following custody could effectively reduce reoffending for this group.

Engaging the family can also be an important part of the resettlement process for some young people, as removing young people from their communities can lead to conflict and breakdown in family relationships.<sup>159</sup> Family focused resettlement services can help to re-engage the family and there is evidence that they can successfully reduce reoffending. The Parenting with Love and Limits programme was piloted in the USA, involving family therapy and parenting work with a consistent therapist within custody through to the community. The evaluation found this programme reduced reoffending in comparison to a matched control group.<sup>160</sup>

Qualitative research shows that even if young people intend to desist from crime<sup>161</sup> and have built up good rapport with youth justice staff,<sup>162</sup> they may be particularly vulnerable when returned to their former communities. This may be especially problematic when they have no support network beyond their former friends.<sup>163</sup> Specialist caseworkers or transition brokers can improve outcomes through maintaining and sustaining engagement with young people

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<sup>158</sup> Mulvey, 2011 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2; based on over 1,300 young people who had committed serious offences).

<sup>159</sup> Moore et al., 2013 (qualitative; EPPI overall 2).

<sup>160</sup> Winokur et al., 2013 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2)

<sup>161</sup> Moore et al., 2013 (qualitative, EPPI overall 2).

<sup>162</sup> Wingrove, 2012 (qualitative, EPPI overall 2, this is a small scale study).

<sup>163</sup> Abrams, 2007 (qualitative, EPPI overall 3).

and relevant services or agencies. In an international randomised evaluation of an intervention to support young people with learning and emotional and behavioural difficulties, those who completed the intervention were found to have a 64 per cent lower chance of offending than the control group at 30 days post release, although effects did not persist after this time period.<sup>164</sup>

A review of interventions by the Project Oracle evidence hub (which focuses on London) identified four areas as crucial in engaging young people: '*Referral*', '*Hooking*', '*Influencing*' and '*Facilitation*'.<sup>165</sup> Offering incentives to young people 'hooks' them in, then engagement needs to be sustained within a supportive, encouraging context that will facilitate exit through transition into appropriate employment, training or education.<sup>166</sup> Transition brokers with an enhanced mentoring role have also been shown to have a positive effect on substance misuse and on time taken to reoffend.<sup>167</sup> There is some additional qualitative evidence from the Resettlement Support Panel initiative in Wales that resettlement brokers are able to support young people more effectively if they are seen as distinct to those providing supervision as part of a sentence.<sup>168</sup> Qualitative research indicates that young people value a supportive and consistent relationship during the resettlement process.<sup>169, 170</sup>

Educational attainment and school engagement can also be particularly relevant to resettlement success.<sup>171</sup> International research has shown that if young people return to school after a sentence and remain in school, they are less likely to re-offend.<sup>172</sup> For example, research from Florida compared outcomes for over 700 young people and showed that properly funded, intensive resettlement support focused on specialised, remedial education and intensive vocational training was associated with reduced substance use, engagement with education or employment and having suitable housing.<sup>173</sup> The California

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<sup>164</sup> Clark et al., 2011 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3). Small sample of participants (less than 80).

<sup>165</sup> Belur, 2013 (systematic review) (This study focused on interventions with young people not in education, employment or training)

<sup>166</sup> There have also been indicative outcomes for the London programme, 'Daedalus', which involved the referral of young people to the Heron Unit at under 18 YOI at Feltham followed by intensive resettlement planning, cognitive behavioural intervention, life skills training and supportive resettlement brokers. The evaluation outcomes should be read with some caution as they are based on a small number of young people who volunteered to be on the programme (and therefore possibly may be motivated to change their offending behaviour) and it was not possible to match the intervention sample fully with similar comparators. See Powell et al., (2012).

<sup>167</sup> Bouffard et al., 2008 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>168</sup> Phillips et al., 2012 (EPPI overall 2) (Data were not available for most of the recidivism analyses so this is essentially a qualitative study).

<sup>169</sup> Moore et al., 2013 (EPPI overall 2).

<sup>170</sup> Abrams, 2006 (EPPI overall 2).

<sup>171</sup> Hazel et al., 2012 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2) Wright et al 2013 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2) Fagan, 1990 (MSMS design 5, EPPI overall 3). International evidence.

<sup>172</sup> Blomberg et al., 2011 (MSMS design 2; EPPI overall 2). Study from USA.

<sup>173</sup> National Council on Crime and Delinquency, 2009 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3).

Life skills programme, in the USA, is another transitions programme focussing on training. An evaluation demonstrated reduced reoffending rates and better resilience to crime promoting influences such as substance misuse or criminal peer groups.<sup>174</sup>

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<sup>174</sup> Josi & Sechrest, 1999 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 3).

## 5. Serious and sexual offending

### Summary of findings

Based on international evidence, a number of interventions and approaches were highlighted that can help reduce serious or sexual offending among young people.

- Three types of intervention may be more effective with serious offenders: interpersonal skills training, individual counselling and behavioural programmes (including, but not limited to CBT).
- There is international evidence that interventions such as Multisystematic therapy (MST) with young people who have offended sexually can reduce both subsequent sexual and non-sexual reoffending.

Serious offending and sexual offending were not always defined in the studies reviewed and when they were, definitions varied between studies. Mindful of this, a degree of caution needs to be applied when considering findings.

### 5.1 Serious offences<sup>175</sup>

Meta-analysis, based on international studies, has identified three types of intervention that may be more effective with serious offenders: interpersonal skills training, individual counselling and behavioural programs (including, but not limited to CBT). However, the extent of improvement in recidivism rates varied and, in common with other types of offending, neither purely punitive nor purely vocational interventions seem effective, even when implemented for longer or with more intensity.<sup>176</sup>

Similarly, a more recent meta-analysis based on international studies considering programmes delivered to young serious offenders in institutional environments concluded that the interventions were effective in reducing both general and serious reoffending (the latter to a greater degree).<sup>177</sup> However, due to a limited number of studies included in this analysis, it was not possible to discern the specific characteristics associated with effective interventions.

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<sup>175</sup> No evaluations reviewed for this study were found that considered the management of serious group or street gang involved young people. The Home Office commissioned the Early Intervention Foundation to review the international evidence on the risk factors associated with young people's involvement in gangs and also what works to prevent gang involvement, youth violence and crime. See Cordis Bright Consulting (2015) and O'Connor & Waddell, 2015 respectively. Included for context.

<sup>176</sup> Lipsey et al., 2000 (meta-analysis).

<sup>177</sup> Garrido & Morales, 2007 (meta-analysis). Strictly out of scope as age range included 12–21 year olds, but included due to relevance.

In cases of severe personality disorder, outcomes can also be improved using 'decompression treatment', which is designed to remove antagonistic social bonds. It can be used in combination with CBT and the approach varies depending on the level of aggressiveness and other individual characteristics of the young person. Decompression treatment can lead to reductions in institutional violence and also reoffending over a two year follow up period.<sup>178</sup> Use of this model has shown that the benefit to cost ratio may be as high as seven to one when compared with treatment as usual.<sup>179</sup>

## 5.2 Sexual offending

Meta-analyses<sup>180</sup> have demonstrated that intervention programmes can be effective in reducing further sexual and non-sexual offending amongst young people. However, either the quality or the number of the individual studies included in the analysis mean that conclusions must be treated with a degree of caution.

Several randomised controlled trials, by the developers of multisystemic therapy (MST), have demonstrated that MST for young sexual offenders' results in lower reoffending rates (both sexual and non-sexual) compared to treatment as usual.<sup>181</sup> In one study which assessed the effectiveness of a specialist, community based intervention (focused on individual needs, social and family factors), findings showed that young people who received the intervention were significantly less likely to be charged for any criminal offence (including sexual and nonsexual violent offences) over a 20 year follow up period than a comparison group.<sup>182</sup> Another study assessed the effect of RJ conferencing and a specialist youth sexual abuse prevention programme on reoffending. However, it was difficult to disentangle the impact of intervention, court disposals and prior criminal history.<sup>183</sup> Nonetheless, the researchers concluded that for those young people with no prior offending, RJ and the specialist programme slowed the rate of reoffending and reduced reoffending respectively.

Qualitative research focusing on the perceptions of young people who have participated in interventions for sexual offending has suggested that, in cases of intra-familial sexual

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<sup>178</sup> Caldwell, Skeem et al., 2006 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 3).

<sup>179</sup> Caldwell, Vitacco et al., 2006 (MSMS design 3, EPPI overall 3).

<sup>180</sup> For example see, WSIPP, 2015a; WSIPP, 2015b; Aos & Drake, 2013; Rietzel & Carbonell, 2006.

<sup>181</sup> Borduin et al., 2009 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3); Letourneau et al., 2009 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3); Letourneau et al., 2013 (MSMS design 5; EPPI overall 3). Sexual offending outcomes based on either self report or arrest.

<sup>182</sup> Worling et al., 2010 (MSMS design 4; EPPI overall 2). The Sexual Abuse: Family Education and Treatment (SAFE-T) Program. The comparison group was composed of treatment refusers, treatment drop-outs, and those who received alternative treatments.

<sup>183</sup> Daly et al., 2013 (MSMS design 3; EPPI overall 2). Note that prior criminal history was found to have the strongest impact on future offending.



offending, involving the parents in the intervention was thought to be more effective than when parents were not engaged.<sup>184</sup> Additionally, the quality of the relationship with the practitioner may be particularly important to the young person. For young males who had not reoffended between one and five years post intervention, the important components of the programme were considered to be: peer support, regular structure to their day, and the therapeutic relationship.<sup>185</sup> Some evidence indicated that effective multi-agency working, alongside safe, secure housing and education<sup>186</sup> can improve outcomes with this group; however a lack of strategic oversight and embedded structures for inter-agency working could undermine good practice.<sup>187</sup>

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<sup>184</sup> Halse et al., 2012 (EPPI overall 3).

<sup>185</sup> Franey et al., 2004 (EPPI overall 2).

<sup>186</sup> England, 2009 (EPPI overall 3).

<sup>187</sup> Calderbank et al., 2013 (EPPI overall 3).

## 6. Conclusions

This study aimed to consider the available evidence to assess what works to manage young people in the youth justice system. This section offers a high level synthesis of the reviewed evidence and consideration should be given to these findings when designing and delivering programmes for young people to secure the best outcomes.

When reviewing findings, attention should be paid to the issues and caveats set out in Section 2.3. The majority of these findings are from evaluations conducted in the USA and their transferability to an English and Welsh context should be considered given the different legal and sentencing frameworks as well as economic and social contexts.

In agreement with previous reviews, the approaches that tend to be the most effective at reducing youth reoffending are those that: are targeted at individuals who are most at risk of reoffending; consider their needs (including pre-existing risks); assess their ability to respond to services provided; and, take into account the wider context within which the offence occurred. Multiple coordinated services which address a range of offending related risks and needs rather than a single factor are also associated with an increased likelihood of reducing reoffending among young people.

When applying risk based or other approaches to inform rehabilitation planning, it must be borne in mind that some individuals will desist from crime without any intervention. There is also evidence to suggest that drawing young people who commit low level crimes into the formal youth justice system may increase their reoffending. Therefore, diversionary approaches, including restorative justice, which direct these individuals away from the justice system may be appropriate for some young people.

A number of good quality reviews of the international studies show that recidivism can be reduced by well implemented therapeutic interventions both within community and custody settings. The programmes that tend to have better reoffending outcomes are characterised by using a combination of skills training and cognitive behavioural intervention, rather than deploying punitive or surveillance focussed programmes.

Within the community, effective programmes can be characterised by strong inter-agency partnerships that are well managed, with appropriate strategic leadership. Partnership protocols need to be embedded into routine practice. Strong international evidence shows that family based therapeutic interventions that draw on the community and also consider

wider offender needs can be effective and deliver a positive net return on investment. However, the family can itself be a setting of trauma, abuse and exploitation, and this may be particularly relevant for those young people who come to the attention of youth offending teams. Therefore, this needs to be considered as part of intervention planning for young offenders.

Community based interventions tend to be more effective than custody. However, some young people will always need to go to custody and these young people are likely to be those in most need of intensive intervention. Where appropriate, consideration should be given to moving young people to well trained and well supported foster carers. Good quality supervision in custody can also require planning for release and resettlement to be an integral part of the sentence, and for young people's needs to be assessed in terms of transition back to the community as well as institutional adjustment. Brokers or advocates who will help guide young people through transition and be available when needed are worth considering.

Prison visitation programmes aimed at young people at risk of offending were not found to reduce offending behaviour; indeed, they can increase the likelihood of committing crime. In addition, military style 'boot camps' run as alternative to custody were also unlikely to reduce reoffending.

No one style of talking with or to young people is going to resonate either with all staff or all those in their care. However, there is some consensus that effective communication is characterised by mutual understanding, respect and fairness. Motivational interviewing and other techniques that will allow a young person to confront the consequences of his or her actions may be useful when deployed in conjunction with other support and individual therapies. Throughout, it is important to remember that a young person's cognitive reasoning and coping styles will have been affected, to some extent, by her or his life experiences.

Finally, in all settings young people need to be encouraged to develop agency, autonomy and respect for others as well as themselves. This requires commitment from staff as well as the young people themselves. Care should be taken to make sure that young people understand how they arrived at their position, and how to move forward.

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## Appendix A

### Glossary of interventions and key terms

#### Aggression Replacement Training

Aggression Replacement Training is a structured programme of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). It is aimed at chronically aggressive children and adolescents ages 12-17. If implemented properly, then the programme runs for ten weeks, and the young person attends sessions for three, one hour slots each week. The three areas covered each week are social skills, anger management, and moral reasoning.

#### Benefit-cost analysis and estimates

Tables 3.1 to 4.3, in the main report set out Dartington Social Research Unit cost estimates for a range of interventions. The various terms included in the tables are defined below.

- Cost: total cost of delivery per person. The actual cost will vary by service provider and the target person;
- Total benefits: sum of benefits to the tax payer, participants and others;
- Benefits minus costs: captures net benefits after subtracting the cost to deliver the intervention;
- Benefit-cost ratio: refers to pounds (£) saved for every pound (£) invested;
- Rate of return on investment: the internal rate of return (IRR), which is used to compare interventions, on a like for like basis, on purely economic terms. IRR is the interest rate (also known as the discount rate) that will bring the benefits that accrue from each intervention over the young person's life to equal the current value of cash invested in that intervention; and,
- Risk of loss: potential risk of loss to the investor if they made this investment 100 times. Figure is based on statistical modelling that takes uncertainty in the estimates into account.

See Dartington Social Research Unit 'Investing in Children' website for more information on the methodological approach: <http://investinginchildren.eu/search/interventions/treatment>

#### Boot Camp

'Boot Camp' is a phrase used for a particular type of short term incarceration with militaristic characteristics. Originally developed for adult offenders they have also been used for young people who offend. The approach often varies, and how such a policy is implemented and the underpinning philosophy can be both crucial in determining its characteristics (and



effectiveness). All will have an element of military discipline and potentially both staff and young people will be subject to military style dress and behaviours and will participate in hard physical exercise and/or labour. In many, a punitive stance will be taken and the militaristic aspects will be the defining feature of the camp. In some camps, a more therapeutic approach is adopted, both through the sentence and transition from the camp.

### **Child(ren) First**

The aim of the Children First approach is to deliver services to a young person, who is seen and assessed as being more than the label "young offender". It has been implemented in Swansea and evaluated as a promising programme by the Youth Justice Board. First time offenders, who admitted their offence, are eligible for this approach which involves needs assessment and well integrated inter-agency working. See: Haines and Case (2012), also Haines et al., 2013.

### **Cognitive Behavioural Therapy**

Cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) has been widely adopted with adults and is also utilised within youth justice settings. CBT relies on insight into one's own thoughts and behaviours and is intended to adjust both thoughts and attitudes so that they will in turn lead to changes in behaviour. Programmes typically last at least 20 weeks and may have different elements of both behavioural and cognitive intervention. It should be noted however that a number of multi-systemic interventions could also come under the umbrella of cognitive behavioural intervention. These have been separated out in line with other literature as they are proprietary programmes with separate bodies of evidence and the CBT makes up part, but not all of such interventions. They include: Aggression Replacement therapy, Functional Family Therapy, Moral Reconnection Therapy, Multidimensional Therapeutic Foster Care and Multi Systemic Therapy.

### **Coordination of Services**

Coordination of Services (COS), also known as "WayOUT" is a programme designed for first time entrants to the juvenile justice system. It works with parents and teenagers who are either referred by the courts or self refer. It runs over two consecutive weekends and provides education and skills in areas including parenting, communication, building strengths and conflict resolution.

## **Dialectical Behavioural Therapy**

Dialectical Behavioural Therapy (DBT), which is a form of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT), was originally designed to provide therapists with another way of working with suicidal or borderline personality disordered individuals. It acknowledges current capabilities and capacities of the client and is more accepting and validating than traditional cognitive behavioural therapy. It entails quite structured components (normally group based), individual psychotherapy and ongoing support from a therapist (typically via telephone).

## **Drugs Courts**

Youth drugs courts have been pioneered in the USA. They are specialist hearings that acknowledge the need for rehabilitation and treatment of young people (up to 18 years old) with substance misuse problems that coincide with their offending behaviours. Within a drug court, the level of judicial involvement ongoing throughout the process of supervision is much higher than within a more traditional juvenile court process.

## **Family Group Conferencing**

Family group conferencing is a form of mediation that has grown out of restorative justice. A typical conference will have representatives of the victim, offender and other interested parties, normally social workers and potentially police. Those directly and indirectly affected can be incorporated. This is not a one-off meeting. Good practice would indicate several conversations and planning meetings between the mediator and the interested parties. Once the conference begins, that too may happen in more than one session, particularly if subsequent restitution was agreed or actions need to be monitored in some way. FGC is now routinely used as part of family law, particularly in child protection cases as well as within the youth justice system.

## **Functional Family Therapy**

Functional Family Therapy (FFT) is a programme aimed at young people and their families. It is used in youth justice and welfare/mental health cases. Interventions are offered for between three to four months in an interactive, multi-agency manner. It relies on assessment and concomitant intervention to work with a young person (between 11 and 18) and his or her family. Close attention is paid to the predictive and protective factors that might affect a young person's behaviour and coping strategies. These are both internal to the family and outside it.

## **Girls' Court**

Court hearings specifically for girls were developed in America. Pioneered by Hawaii, other jurisdictions in the USA have subsequently adopted a similar model. The original version is driven by judges who take a lead in the implementation of the sentence going beyond determining disposal. A strong therapeutic stance is taken; girls and their families are expected to attend group work run by the court as well as more routine forms of intervention. All staff at the court are female and girls' and young women's vulnerabilities are fully considered. This has led to similar courts elsewhere that are specialists in cases involving girls and young women who have been sexually exploited or trafficked.

## **Good Lives Model**

The Good Lives Model (GLM) is concerned with individuals' ability to formulate and select goals, construct plans, and to act freely in the implementation of these plans. A closely related assumption is the basic premise that offenders, like all humans, value certain states of mind, personal characteristics, and experiences, which are defined in the GLM as primary goods. Interventions under the GLM are intended to provide the offender with the means to change how he or she approaches life. In trying to implement the GLM with young people, the first step will be to work with each youth to identify her or his targets, assessing how s/he would envisage a good life. Deeper understanding of specific goals or "primary goods" would involve prioritising them and working out what blockages there might be before s/he can attain those primary goods. Intervention would then be tailored to address both the criminogenic (risk) needs and the good lives needs.

## **Intensive Supervision & Surveillance Programme (England and Wales)**

An Intensive Supervision and Surveillance (ISS) requirement, is a community youth justice disposal in England and Wales, which is a high intensity alternative to custody. ISS combines a set period of electronic tagging with a comprehensive and sustained focus on tackling the factors that contribute to the young person's offending behaviour. ISS is aimed at young offenders, aged 10 to 17 years, on the custody threshold and has to be considered as an option before a custodial sentence is given. ISS may also be attached to conditional bail.

## **Intensive Supervision (USA)**

In the USA, Juvenile Intensive Supervision Programs are designed as an alternative to custody and involve strict conditions of compliance. Some programmes include more rehabilitative intervention, while others emphasise surveillance and control. Police or

probation officers have frequent contact with the young people subject to Intensive Supervision and high levels of technical violations can thereby ensue.

### **Meta-Analysis**

A meta-analysis is a statistical technique that combines the results from a number of different studies to obtain a quantitative estimate of the overall effect of a particular intervention on a defined outcome. Meta-analysis produces a statistically stronger conclusion than can be provided by any individual study and therefore more emphasis is usually placed on results from this type of analysis.

### **Motivational Interviewing**

Motivational Interviewing is a form of collaborative dialogue between a practitioner and client. It is typically used with individuals who are ambivalent about taking steps to change certain behaviours. It is a technique that is used to help individuals to confront the consequences of their actions and decisions whilst being guided through ways to resolve challenges. It therefore fits well within strengths based approaches to rehabilitation and is widely used within more therapeutic approaches to change.

### **Multidimensional Therapeutic Foster Care/Therapeutic Foster Care**

See Treatment Foster Care, Oregon (TFCO)

### **Multisystemic Therapy**

Multisystemic Therapy (MST) is a family and community based treatment. It is intended to address serious antisocial behaviour in both young men and young women, between the ages of 12 and 17, in particular those who are highly likely to be taken into care or other institutions. The intervention works in a multifaceted way, situating the young person within a network of their family, peer group, school and wider communities. The intervention will last for around four months and works with other services. MST therapists will typically have a higher degree in social work or counselling and they work intensively with families and young people, often being "on call" 24 hours a day.

### **Parenting orders**

Parenting orders under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 were implemented across England and Wales in June 2000, and were extended under both the Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2003 and Criminal Justice Act 2003. They are made against parents and aim to prevent offending and anti-social behaviour by reinforcing parental responsibility.

## Parenting/ Parent Training Programmes

Interventions designed to support and aid parents in their child rearing practice. They have been utilised in conjunction with early intervention for child welfare and potential neglect, alongside substance misuse programming and in America, as part of divorce proceedings, mandated by the family courts. In England and Wales, they can form part of a Parenting Order criminal justice disposal. Support provided may involve direct skills training, education, awareness raising, or help in negotiating other services. Programmes may be voluntary or required and may be stand alone or part of a wider intervention, typically involving multiagency interactions.

## Randomised Control Trial

A randomised controlled trial (RCT) is viewed as the gold standard approach for outcome evaluations to answer 'what works' questions. In a RCT, there will be at least two groups, one is the experimental or treatment group and the other group is the control group. The control group may receive either no intervention or treatment as usual. Outcomes between the two groups will be compared to assess the efficacy of the intervention/experiment. Whether a person is assigned to either of these groups is random and the only intentional difference between the two groups is the intervention.

## Rapid Evidence Assessment

A Rapid Evidence Assessment (REA) is a way of collating, evaluating and synthesising research and evaluation evidence on a particular topic, as comprehensively as possible, within the constraints of a given timetable.

## Reparative Justice

Reparative justice is sometimes used interchangeably with the term "Restorative Justice" and they have developed through similar routes. However, each term can be used differently in the literature and in law, both English and Welsh and International. Reparative justice has, to some extent been codified by the United Nations. In respect to violations of international human rights law, reparation is taken to mean: *restitution, compensation, rehabilitation, satisfaction and guarantees of non-repetition* UN Resolution 60/147 (2005). Similarly in Britain, reparative justice may be postulated as starting with restitution for harm done, and ideally, go beyond that.

## **Resettlement (can also be called Aftercare, Throughcare or Transitions)**

These related concepts are to do with how best to reintegrate a person back into the community, after their sentence, typically after a custodial sentence. Support and rehabilitative programmes are provided to help the individual to adjust to life in the community and to help them not to reoffend.

## **Restorative Justice**

Within restorative justice (RJ), the central focus is not on retribution and blame. Rather, the overarching aim is to address an imbalance within society caused by criminal activity. Thus, the intention of a restorative justice approach is to bring society into equilibrium. The most commonly used strategies are Victim Offender Mediation and Family Group Conferencing. Each is intended to place those who have been victimised more centrally within justice processes and to better facilitate accountability and reintegration of people who have offended.

## **Risk Needs Responsivity**

Derived from the work of Andrews, Bonta and Hoge<sup>188</sup> the model of Risk Needs and Responsivity (RNR) has been widely adopted within criminal justice, including youth domains. The core principles include: risk principle: match the level of service to the offender's risk to re-offend; need principle: assess criminogenic needs and target them in treatment; and responsivity principle: Maximise the offender's ability to learn from a rehabilitative intervention by providing cognitive behavioural treatment and tailoring the intervention to the learning style, motivation, abilities and strengths of the offender.

## **Scaled Approach**

The scaled approach is a way to implement a Risk Needs and Responsivity (RNR) approach within youth justice across England and Wales. Typically, assessments will be made by Youth Offending Team (YOT) practitioners using the 'ASSET' risk assessment tool that considers both static and dynamic reoffending risk indicators and also assesses the young person's wider needs. The findings from an assessment inform the YOT practitioners' intervention plan, which aims to reduce an individual young offenders' offending. Following the 2008 Criminal Justice and Immigration Act, the scaled approach was also implemented with Youth Rehabilitation Orders in late 2009.

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<sup>188</sup> Andrews et al., 1990; Andrews and Bonta, 2010.

## **Scared Straight**

Scared Straight is a one-off visitation programme for at risk of offending young people (usually aged 12 to 18 years). It uses organised visits to adult prisons with the intention to deter young offenders, or adolescents at risk of becoming delinquent, from involvement in crime. Typically young people are exposed to an aggressive presentation by prisoners of the harsh realities of incarceration. The programme can include a tour of the facility, living the life of an offender for a full day and one to one counselling.

## **Systematic Review**

A systematic review is a process to identify, evaluate and synthesise the available, rigorous research and evaluation about a particular topic, usually to answer 'what works' questions. Individual studies are reviewed and scored using a weight of evidence scale. The methods drawn upon conducting a review are designed to maximise the number and quality of available materials, and they are intended to provide policy and practice relevant answers to key questions.

## **Therapeutic Alliance/Engagement**

Therapeutic alliance is the relationship between a practitioner and his or her client. It reflects the willingness and ability of the service user to engage with the service being offered. It will involve shared views of the purpose of an intervention and the likelihood of a positive outcome.

## **Treatment Foster Care Oregon (TFCO) (formerly known as Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care)**

The ultimate aim of Therapeutic Foster Care and Multidimensional Treatment Foster Care is to return young people to their families. It is acknowledged that this is not always possible but the starting point is that they should, wherever possible, return. Whilst fostered, the young people are placed with carers who are well trained and supervised closely. At any one time, the child or young person being fostered should be the only looked after child/young person within that foster home. The foster carers are provided with additional training and ongoing consultation and support. Supervisors should always have low caseloads and be in daily contact with each MTFC family. Interventions are tailored to the child's age and abilities and both skills training and therapy are provided. For more information see: <http://episcenter.psu.edu/ebp/multidimensional>

## **Victim Offender Mediation**

Victim Offender Mediation, which is a form of restorative justice (RJ), typically involves a series of meetings, first between a trained mediator and the victim and offender separately, then bringing all three parties together. The duration and number of meetings involved subsequently should depend on the nature of the offence that was committed, the impact it has had on the parties involved, and how well the agreed plans for restitution or reparation are followed. [http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/rj\\_models/](http://www.restorativejustice.org.uk/resource/rj_models/)

## **Weight of Evidence**

The Weight of Evidence is a formalised system by which the methodological rigour of a study paper is assessed. This enables decisions to be made as to whether or not to include a particular source in a review, or how much to privilege its findings within such a review.

## **Youth Offending Teams (YOTs)**

Youth Offending Teams (YOTs) are multi-agency teams made up of representatives from police, probation, education, health and social services, and specialist workers, such as accommodation officers and substance misuse workers. YOTs were set up across England and Wales following the 1998 Crime and Disorder Act with the intention of reducing the risk of young people offending and re-offending.

## **Youth or Teen Courts**

Youth courts divert young people who have offended away from mainstream US youth justice. Before appearing in teen court, the young person and his or her family must agree to abide by the decision of the court and the young person is normally expected to admit guilt. There are a number of different models but they will typically hear the cases of first time, or relatively low level offenders between the ages of 12 and 17. The system is called a teen court, not just because it involves the space to hear the cases of teenagers but because they are staffed by people in their teens. In some cases the court is entirely constituted of volunteer young people. In others, this is modified slightly where the judge is an adult who will normally be a respected community member or member of the legal profession, possibly including professional judges.



## Appendix B

### Methodology

The methodological approach taken to produce this REA is set out in this section.

#### Inclusion and exclusion criteria

The following inclusion and exclusion criteria were used to guide the study selection process:

##### Inclusion criteria:

- studies published from 1st January, 1990 to 28th February, 2014 (exception was made for unpublished sources that were in press, seminal works from other time periods and other materials received via the call for papers);
- studies focused on young offenders, although studies which considered both young offenders and adults were included provided young offender effects were considered separately;
- age range of offenders 10 to under 18 years, unless related to transitions where age range was raised to under 22 years;
- outcome evaluations had to include a measure of reoffending or breach findings;
- process type evaluations had to include consideration of how the intervention was implemented, not just what was implemented;
- english language sources;
- any jurisdiction;
- interventions designed post-conviction, court, Youth Referral Panel or diversion scheme or other such mandated interventions.

##### Exclusion criteria:

- studies published pre 1990 (unless seminal) and post February 2014, unless received via call for papers;
- early years intervention or prevention programmes that were not part of a court mandated or diversionary scheme (unless from a country with a higher age of criminal responsibility, or if the call for papers provided material that was a major review and/or drew lessons that could be applied to criminal justice mandated interventions);
- studies that focused on risk predictors for offending behaviours;
- studies that did not separate adult and young offender findings;

- studies solely considering the under 10s or over 18s, unless related to transitions between youth and adult facilities;

## Bibliographic databases and the call for papers

A protocol for searching and enhancing consistency of searching was agreed with commissioners and followed. The list below indicates which databases were searched.

Academic databases:

- PsycINFO; ISI Web of knowledge/Web of Science (this includes: Arts and Humanities Citation Index; Conference Proceedings Citation Index; Science Conference Proceedings Citation Index: Social Science and Humanities; Social Sciences Citation Index; Science Citation Index & Science Direct); IBSS (International Bibliography of the Social Sciences); Criminal Justice Abstracts (via Ebsco); LexisNexis; Hein Online; Hein Online; Hein Online; J-Stor; British Library: EthOS; Medline; Ingenta Connect; Emerald Insight; Home Office Science (via .gov.uk) & Scottish, Welsh and NI equivalents; also the equivalents in other countries such as NCJRS; Campbell Collaboration Systematic Reviews.

Grey literature databases:

- Google Scholar; Research Gate; GreyNet; CiaoNet (for full text PDFs only); RAND; The Joseph Rowntree Foundation; and Barnardos.

## Call for papers

Project team members sent requests to their extended networks of collaborators and other researchers and practitioners requesting relevant material. The Forensic Psychology Research Group (FPRG) and Crime and Conflict Research Centre (CCRC) at Middlesex University also put the call out to their contacts.

## Search terms used

All search terms and search strings used were agreed with commissioners of the research. The research team started by identifying core ideas, then search strings were created, using Boolean operators as far as possible. Examples of search approach, including search terms are set out below. Example one relates to 'what works' questions and two relates to questions on the implementation of interventions.

1. sexual OR violent\* OR aggressive\* OR acquisitive OR hate OR radical OR gang\* OR "serious group offending" OR "serious group offences" OR robb\* OR burgl\*

- OR theft OR prolific\* OR arson\* OR breach OR "criminal damage" OR "dangerous driving" OR drug\* OR fraud OR forgery OR "motoring offences" OR "motoring offenses" OR "driving offenses" OR "driving offences" OR "public order" OR disorder OR racially aggravated OR "handling stolen goods" OR TWOC OR "vehicle theft" OR "unauthorised taking" OR "unauthorized taking" OR knife OR knives OR gun\*
2. facilitator OR practition\* OR "care worker" OR "care workers" OR therapist\* OR "case-worker" OR "case-workers" OR "probation officers" OR "probation officer" OR "probation staff" OR "parole officer" OR "parole officers" OR "correctional officer" OR "correctional officers" OR "correctional staff" "social worker" OR "social workers" OR "social work" OR "prison officer" or "prison guard" OR "prison officers" or "prison guards" OR Volunt\* OR YOT\* OR "youth offending team" OR "youth offender team" OR "YOT worker" OR mentor OR volunteer OR "peer mentor" OR "peer mentoring" OR "community partner" OR "community partners" OR "youth worker" OR "youth work" OR "youth workers"

The initial concepts were then drawn on in combinations within the search strings used.

Up to 48 different combinations of search strings were used to guide the literature searches.

One example search string is given below:

("Young Offender Institution" OR "Secure Training Centre" OR "Secure Training Center" OR "Secure Children's Home" OR "youth home" OR "youth homes" OR "youth residential program" OR "youth residential programs" OR "youth hostel" OR "youth hostels" OR "secure residential facility" OR "secure residential facilities" OR "juvenile detention" OR correction\*) AND (facilitator OR practition\* OR "care worker" OR "care workers" OR therapist\* OR "case-worker" OR "case-workers" OR "probation officers" OR "probation officer" OR "probation staff" OR "parole officer" OR "parole officers" OR "correctional officer" OR "correctional officers" OR "correctional staff" "social worker" OR "social workers" OR "social work" OR "prison officer" or "prison guard" OR "prison officers" or "prison guards" OR Volunt\* OR YOT\* OR "youth offending team" OR "youth offender team" OR "YOT worker" OR mentor OR volunteer OR "peer mentor" OR "peer mentoring" OR "community partner" OR "community partners" OR "youth worker" OR "youth work" OR "youth workers") AND (cost\* OR benefit\* OR cost-effect\* OR "cost effectiveness" OR "cost effective" OR "cost benefit analysis" OR "economic analysis" OR "cost of crime" OR "costs of crime" OR "social return" OR "Social Return On Investment" OR "cost of offending" OR "break-even analysis" OR "break even analysis" or "breakeven analysis" OR "value for money" OR "VfM")

## Weight of Evidence

Weight of Evidence (WoE) is used to facilitate systematic judgements about the methodological quality of potential materials and their relevance to the specified questions. The research team used two WoE approaches, the Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (MSMS)<sup>189</sup> and an adapted form of the Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI) scale.<sup>190</sup>

### The Maryland Scientific Methods Scale (MSMS)

The MSMS research design scale is scored from one to five where five is a study of excellence. A threshold score of three was required for the study to be included in this review, with an ideal score of four or five. The MSMS evidence categories are as follows:<sup>191</sup>

- Level 1. Correlation between a crime prevention program and a measure of crime or crime risk factors at a single point in time.
- Level 2. Temporal sequence between the program and the crime or risk outcome clearly observed, or the presence of a comparison group without demonstrated comparability to the treatment group.
- Level 3. A comparison between two or more comparable units of analysis, one with and one without the program.
- Level 4. Comparison between multiple units with and without the program, controlling for other factors, or using comparison units that evidence only minor differences.
- Level 5. Random assignment and analysis of comparable units to program and comparison groups.

**Table B.1: MSMS strength of research design scale**

Methods Score	Before-After	Control	Multiple Units	Randomization
Level 1			yes	
Level 2	yes			
Level 3	yes	yes		
Level 4	yes	yes	yes	
Level 5	yes	yes	yes	yes

Note that the multiple units are to test for findings in comparable groups. If no comparability exists, then consider this to be absent.

<sup>189</sup> Sherman et al., 1998.

<sup>190</sup> Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre; Gough, 2007.

<sup>191</sup> Taken directly from Sherman et al., 1998.

## Evidence for Policy and Practice Information and Co-ordinating Centre (EPPI)

The EPPI approach is based around four scales, each of which is scored as high (3), medium (2) or low (1). The four scales are set out below. Sources were included if an overall EPPI score (i.e. EPPI 4) of at least two was achieved.

*Adapted EPPI 1:* taking into account all of the quality assessment issues, how confident are you that the source's findings answer all of the question(s) posed within this source? High (3), medium (2), low (1). Factors to guide decisions: The focus here is on evaluating the paper independent of the REA specification. Reviewers assessed papers with the following questions in mind:

- Is there is a clear statement of aims of the research and is it related to the aims of the REA? Is there is a clear statement of findings? Is there adequate discussion of the evidence for and against the researchers' arguments? Are the findings discussed in relation to the original research questions? Was the study subjected to some form of peer review? If not peer reviewed, was it a significant piece that is nonetheless considered very influential (e.g. stimulated new policy/ debate/ research/ law)? Each paper was taken on its merits and discussed amongst the team to reach consensus. In some studies it was difficult to distinguish between the findings of the study and the conclusions. In those cases, confidence of these combined results/ conclusions was coded.

*Adapted EPPI 2:* appropriateness of research design and analysis for addressing the questions of this rapid evidence assessment: high (3), medium (2), low (1). Factors to guide decisions: the focus here is on whether the study design and analysis are suitable for answering the questions of the REA. Reviewers assessed papers with the following questions in mind:

- Have the reasons for the particular elements of the design been discussed and justified (especially choice of data collection methods- questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, diaries, etc.)? Was the methodology used (quantitative/ qualitative/ mixed methods) appropriate? Were ethical issues considered? Were enough details provided so that the reader can assess whether ethical standards were maintained? Was approval from an ethics committee granted? Do the researchers discuss issues such as informed consent, confidentiality, etc.? Was a comparison group required/ used? If so how were they matched/ recruited? Is the data analysis sufficiently rigorous? Was a full description of the analysis process provided? Is it clear how data presented were selected from the sample?

Were contradictory data presented/ taken into account/ discussed? In summary the quality of data, the analysis and synthesis of data, the appropriateness of data and the interpretation of data were assessed.

*Adapted EPPI 3:* relevance of the study (including conceptual focus, context, sample and measures) for addressing the questions in this rapid evidence assessment: high (3), medium (2), low (1). Factors to guide decisions: the focus here is on whether things like definitions/ sample etc. of the study are in line with the questions for the REA. Reviewers assessed papers with the following questions in mind:

- Are the operational definitions used in line with those utilised in the literature searches? If not, are they similar enough that the study is relevant? Was the recruitment strategy appropriate to the aims of the research and for the questions posed by this REA? Is there sufficient explanation of how the participants were selected and recruited? Is there sufficient consideration/ explanation of the representativeness of the sample or why the participants included were most appropriate? Were there any issues with recruitment/ retention of research or comparison group sample (e.g. response rate/ ineligibility/ attrition)? Were there any issues with the data collection methods? Is it clear how data were collated? Was the setting for collection justified? Were the methods justified? Do the study authors engage in reflexivity e.g. consideration of the possibility of researcher bias, relationships between them and the participants?

*Adapted EPPI 4:* overall WoE: high (3), medium (2), low (1). Factors to guide decisions: taking into account quality of execution, appropriateness of design and relevance of focus, what is the overall weight of evidence this study provides to answer the question of this specific rapid evidence assessment? Reviewers assessed papers with the following questions in mind:

- Provenance: what are the author's/authors' credentials? Are the authors' arguments supported by evidence (e.g. primary historical material, case studies, narratives, statistics, recent scientific findings)? Objectivity: is the source's tone even handed or prejudicial? Are contrary data considered or is certain pertinent information ignored/ used selectively to reinforce an authorial position? Is there evidence of bias in the article? Do the statistics match those in other publications? If not, is the argument (method, research design etc) on which they are based convincing? How do we know the data are reliable? What other supporting data are available? Persuasiveness: which of the arguments made are most/ least convincing? Value: are the arguments and conclusions made

convincing? Does the work ultimately contribute in any significant way to an understanding of the subject?

## Using the Weights of Evidence

When a source was quantitative, then both MSMS and EPPI scores were used; where qualitative or mixed methods then just the EPPI. The MSMS protocol was drawn directly from the original source, whereas the EPPI guidance was adapted (see protocols above). The guidance protocols ensured consistency in approach across the members of the research team. Quantitative evidence was required to reach at least threshold confidence or relevance ratings on both WoEs (3 on the MSMS design and 2 on the EPPI overall). Other research designs could be included based on the EPPI overall alone (at or above level 2). Papers that fell below both thresholds were rejected.

## Synthesised sources

Each title was scanned by one of six members of the core research team, with approximately 15 per cent scanned by at least two members of the team. Over 3,000 sources were identified as being possibly relevant and their abstracts were read to decide whether or not to consider them for full extraction, these were all considered by at least two members of the team. Eventually, 369 papers were extracted into an Access Database and 272 sources were initially considered for inclusion in this report. Following further refinements and editing, this paper is based on 164 cited sources, of which 137 were scored and categorised using the full Weight of Evidence procedure and the remaining sources are included for context. The findings are derived from 164 synthesised sources.

Table B.2 shows the number of sources included at each stage of the review process.

**Table B.2: Summary of reviewed sources drawn on at each stage of the review process**

Filtering of Sources	
Number	Search Stage
65,000	Unique sources, identified by bibliographic searches and call for papers, filtered by title
3,285	Sources filtered by abstract
369	Sources fully extracted
164	Sources included in the final synthesis and this report
71	Sources used to provide evidence of impact that met or exceeded MSMS level 3 and EPPI level 2
25	Sources used to provide evidence about implementation that met or exceeded EPPI level 2
41	Meta-analyses or systematic reviews
27	Papers included for context